

SEVEN DAYS

A man wearing a black beanie, a dark jacket, and snow boots is kneeling on a frozen body of water. To his left is a large ice auger. The background is a vast, flat expanse of ice under a pale sky.

FREE

ONION APPEAL

PAGE 14

Mayoral hopefuls
woo a new Winooski

WATER WARRIOR

James Ehlers is Lake Champlain's
loudest — and most divisive — advocate

BY KATHRYN FLAEG • PAGE 30

VERMONT'S INDEPENDENT VOICE FEBRUARY 18/25, 2015 VOL. 22 NO. 24 SEVENDAYSVT.COM



UP THE WALL

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Street artists in Middlebury



TALKING 'MARGO-PULO'

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VT writer John Furco on his Netflix hit



GYM CLASS REDUX

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An old-school workout reborn

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REYNOLDS & REYNOLDS

the youth office with the support of every Democrat and Republican on the council at the time. This act was opposed despite the fact that the office had nominal city general fund support and line-item grants from several sources. With this move, Burlington lost an office that gave youth a voice in municipal affairs and sent a discouraging message to the future of our community.

Brian Pine
BURLINGTON

A LITTLE HELP

I read with great sadness the article "A Final Act of Devotion: Ends in Tragedy" (February 4). It shows how very quickly our lives can change. And it reminded me of how valuable my older friends and neighbors might be, and how I could easily check on them when the weather is bad.

As silly as it sounds, one thing that might have saved Princess Larkie is an old-fashioned phone. Remember when you had a "rotated" phone? It only plugged in to the phone jack, no electricity needed. Although the Larkie's electricity was out, leaving their cordless landline useless, their phone line might still have been working. Even good cell coverage would have been useless for their cellphones had you not charged it. One old telephone would have allowed Mrs. Larkie to call for help to save her husband — and herself. I am a bit of a techie, and I do keep a Princess phone in the drawer with the candles in case of emergency. There are times when the old ways are actually better and more reliable than the new.

God bless Princess Larkie, the sounds like she was a really wonderful person. In her honor, say yourself and your elderly neighbor or parent an ugly old Princess phone. Go really nice and make it a return. It could save a life.

Susan McMillan
COLCHESTER

BUILDING A MEDICAL EMPIRE

As announced by "Single Provider" (January 24), the strategy of the newly rebranded University of Vermont Medical Center is clearly to develop political clout by consolidation, overgrowth and overemphasis on technology. According to CEO Bernard UVMHC is "getting scale" to better position the hospital to respond to the ever-changing health care landscape. What has happened to the primary value that the needs of patients come first?

Patients' basic health care needs include universal access to care, time to talk with a doctor/provider and ability to follow a prescribed plan.

This pursuit of scale includes additional collateral demands such as bloated administrative costs, as exemplified by 19 vice presidents. The University of Vermont will demonstrate three demonstrations to accommodate the seven-story, 128-bed tower, leaving the city of Burlington to absorb the housing needs for hundreds of displaced students in an already-stressed housing market. It is reminiscent of the expression, "When you have a hammer everything looks like a nail." When building a medical empire and monopoly.

We that of UVMHC, every headache becomes a brain tumor and every chest pain becomes a heart attack, leading to more unnecessary interventions and procedures to pad the bill. We don't need more beds and money; we need a universal system of care.

Anna Carey
BURLINGTON

Carey is a family physician based in Cambridge.

FEEDBACK @ P.O.

CORRECTION

Last week's cover story about the Burlington regional mall, "Vlog to Grow," misstated the number of student-housing units Mayor Mike Weinberger has proposed for downtown Burlington. Reporter Alice Pierce reported 2,200 based on a draft version of the housing-action plan posted at the city's website. An updated version of that plan, posted in a different location on the website, indicates the number has been reduced to 1,300.

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Understanding



STUCK in Vermont: Meet the Rutland Rockers, Verity Channing. Spent a spirited group of high schoolers who gained second place in the recent national chessmaking competition in Dallas, Texas.



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1

WEDNESDAY 25 SPIRITED SONGSTRESS

In 2012, Cecile McLorin Salvant (pictured) won the famed *Pechanga Music International* jazz competition. Since then, the 25-year-old New York native has released two albums, *Live in Paris* and *Live in London*, and performed at the *Blue Note* and *Lincoln Center*. She's also a Grammy Award nominee for *Live in Paris* and *Live in London*. She's also a Grammy Award nominee for *Live in Paris* and *Live in London*.

SEE CELEBRITY LISTING ON PAGE 36

2

ONGOING Nature's Way

To any *rich people* there's a gift approach to his art: in a celebratory work, *Enriched with the colors* was childhood the native woman's crafts like paint, crystal and charcoal entirely from natural materials. On view at the Vermont Arts Council's *Spaletti Gallery*, the drawings in "Up to the Mountains" show *Wild Country* where the artist's mother lived down to the handmade *Enriched*.

SEE INTERVIEW ON PAGE 36

3

THURSDAY 19 Flying High

Under the big top, circus acrobats deliver awe-inspiring acts that dazzle audiences. Out of public view, the artists of strength and flexibility require countless hours of grueling practice. *Altimeter 11* features the world's highest 2013 documentary *Living the Sky* provides an eye-opening glimpse into the private lives of these up-and-coming artists.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 32

4

TUESDAY 24

Page to Stage

Literature takes a dramatic turn in *Page to Stage*, a presentation of poetry and prose from the New England Review read by *Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts* and others. Inspired by *Public Radio International's* *Selected Shorts*, this inaugural event bridges the gap between theater and literature, read with more than 100 performers.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 32

5

FRIDAY 20

Telling Tales

When Vermont author Gill Schaubert teams up with members of *New York Times Magazine's* *Unsettled* team, the result is a book, *Telling Tales*, the second of a series of books. *Unsettled* is a book of *Unsettled* stories, a collection of *Unsettled* stories, a collection of *Unsettled* stories, a collection of *Unsettled* stories.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 32

6

THURSDAY 19-SUNDAY 22

Abridged Version

Theater lovers get more bang for their buck at the *Parish Players 40th Anniversary Play Festival*. Founded in 1973, this annual showcase of works by emerging and established playwrights draws submissions from around the country. With 40 plays to be read this year, what's to be read? (and seven other short works) pick a punch and make every moment count.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 32

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SATURDAY 21

Sounding Off

According to the *London Globe*, the *London Globe* is a book of *London Globe* stories, a collection of *London Globe* stories, a collection of *London Globe* stories, a collection of *London Globe* stories. *London Globe* is a book of *London Globe* stories, a collection of *London Globe* stories, a collection of *London Globe* stories, a collection of *London Globe* stories.

SEE LISTING ON PAGE 30

Ethics 101

In recent weeks, ethics scandals have engulfed the governor of Oregon, the attorney general of Pennsylvania and the speaker of the New York State Assembly.

Here in quiet old Vermont, of course, nobody would dare set against the public interest (except, perhaps, for all those troubling new treasures). If they did, we might never know about it — until now.

That's because, before last month, Vermont was one of just 10 states without any sort of internal legislative ethics committee empowered to investigate potential wrongdoing, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. It remains one of just eight states without an external ethics commission charged with overseeing the conduct of the legislature, the administration or political candidates.

But in recent weeks, the five members of Vermont's newly appointed House Ethics Panel have been meeting for the first time to figure out how to address their peers on ethical conduct and investigate complaints of abuse.

"It's a brand-new panel, and we're trying to figure out our procedure and how we would move forward if there is a claim of some type of behavior that people are concerned about," says Rep. **DAVID DEAN** (D-Westminster), its chair.

"Hopefully we'll never have to act on anything," says Rep. **LARRY CUFFEL** (R-Burlington), Dean's fellow appointee.

Among the questions they're asking: What violations will the group investigate? What punishments might they recommend? How will they take evidence and interview witnesses? And will they inform the public of their findings?

When the House passed a resolution last spring creating the panel, it said some things clear: Any sanctions the group recommends would have to be approved by the House as a whole. And the panel will have to report once a year how many complaints it receives and how such is resolved.

Beyond that, Dean says he hopes to keep its investigations secret, in order to protect from public embarrassment those who are wrongly accused.

"It's going to be confidential," he says. "I promise we'll end up fighting with you, and I think we'll be on solid ground."

Dean says he's also hoping to avoid policing every aspect of lawmakers' lives.

"If you save me driving at 80 miles per hour on I-93, that is not an ethical violation. That's a violation of the law," he says. "It's not a claim we want to handle."

Earlier, the group expects to spend much of its time addressing House Rule 75,

which bars members from voting "upon any question in which they are immediately or directly interested."

For years, the legislature's lawyers have interpreted that rule quite narrowly, allowing lawmakers to vote on legislation affecting their employers, so long as they do not have direct, pecuniary interest.

Previously, when this line is drawn becomes the subject of considerable debate, last winter when Campaigns for Vermont — a political group founded by retired investment banker **BRUCE LEMAN** — went after then-representative **MIKE MCCARTHY**, a St. Albans Democrat. GVF alleged that McCarthy violated Rule 75 when he voted for anti-censorship legislation that would have been filed by his employer, StarComm.

SIXTY-ONE HOUSE MEMBERS — OR 41 PERCENT — INDICATED THEY WERE RETIRED OR OTHERWISE UNEMPLOYED.

Top lawmakers cleared McCarthy, and the former legislator says he doesn't think the matter contributed to his loss last November against Rep. **DAVID FARRER** (R-St. Albans). But he says he's pleased the House is adopting a more formal process to handle such questions.

"What I wanted and what was missing was some affirmative declaration of, 'We chose not to problem here,'" he says.

When it created the panel, the House also voted to require members to disclose their employers, the boards and committees on which they serve, and how much they've paid for their board service. That information is now available at the House clerk's office, but not online.

Rep. **MONA HENNING** (D-Windham), who also serves on the panel, says it may be too difficult and costly to digitize the records and keep them updated.

"They're as public as the scoreboard minutes in my town are," she says. "You can only access those by going into the town office."

But GVF executive director **CYRUS HENNING** says they should be posted online.

"Most Vermonters don't walk into the Statehouse and sit in the clerk's office," he says. "It's nice to have that information, but a necessary part of that is distributing it."

For Green's sake, plenty of time is still around the Statehouse, so we took the

liberty of digitizing the data ourselves and making it, by our deadline, all but two of the House's 150 members had submitted disclosure forms.

Of those, 61 House members — or 41 percent — indicated they were retired or otherwise unemployed. Another 18 legislators — or 12 percent of those who filed on the forms — said they were "self-employed." Only 45 House members — or 32 percent — said they worked for an outside employer, and some of those held only seasonal or part-time jobs.

It's not surprising that so few House members work a conventional nine-to-five. Though it's illegal to fire an employee for serving in the legislature, it's difficult to find a profession that can accommodate an annual four-month absence.

Vermont's so-called "citizens' legislature" is certainly more charitable for its members than that legislature's closely rivaling New Hampshire's. In 2013, 36 of the 36 weeks they serve, plus meals, lodging and airfare allowances, but no benefits. Rep. **ALAN CLARKSON** (D-Windham) recently introduced legislation to compensate lawmakers \$17 an hour in the off-season for constituent service work, but given the state's budget crunch, his bill is dead on arrival.

Among the professions House members listed as disclosures, artist, town clerk, or salesman, lawyer and bus driver. It's sometimes difficult to tell what the "self-employed" really do for a living.

Rep. **JOHN FARRER** (R-Burlington), for example, lists his employer as Pearson & Company, his one-man communications firm — but he's not required to identify his clients. Last year, *News Day* reported that one of them was the now-defunct single-payer lobbying group, Vermont Leads, which paid the House Health Care Committee member to run its social media campaign.

Not surprisingly, House members are heavily involved in their communities. Many simultaneously serve on town selectboards and school boards or as members of local colleges and hospitals — roles that likely enhance their legislative service.

It's difficult to imagine that Rep. **LINDA MYERS** (R-East Junction) serves on a state checking-and-cashiering Rep. **MARK FARRER**'s (D-Stark) Burlington service on the advisory board of a theater-on-line slating site would pose a conflict of interest, but others' volunteer efforts could pose challenges.

Rep. **DAVID DEAN** (D-South Londonderry) and Rep. **WENDY BISHOP** (D-Daniel) have been involved with this year's marquee education study, and both sit on the board of Burr and Burton Academy.

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ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

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House Education Committee chair **DAVE CHAFFE** (D-Bristol), a retired teacher, remains a member of the Vermont-National Education Association teachers' union.

And freshman Rep. **RACHEL WELGE** (D-Roxbury), who works at the Vermont Western House, also serves as a trustee of the Vermont State Employer's Association. That union is bawling the governor over how many state jobs it cut.

Welge says she expects to address any potential conflicts between her two roles "as they arise," but, she argues, "it's reasonable to do both, just as I think it's reasonable for people to be on a school board and dealing with education bills."

Swampy agency

As a longtime member of the Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center board, the results introducing legislation more than a decade ago designed to increase reimbursement rates. She doesn't recall whether she disclosed her affiliation with the hospital when the House voted on the bill. "But I think everybody knew because I was ranting and raving about getting it a bill."

More to the point, she says the hospital is "the biggest employer in my constituency."

Many of House members work for organizations that directly lobby the Legislature. Rep. **BARRON BOWENSON** (D-Burlington) is executive director of Lead, Rep. **JAN BOWENSON** (D-Burlington) is the state director of public affairs for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, and Rep. **GEORGE BUI** (D-Jericho) is a doctor at the University of Vermont Medical Center.

Other legislators appear to do the work of lobbyists themselves.

An executive director of the Vermont Association of Broadcasters, Rep. **JOE CONDON** (D-Colchester) says he mostly focuses on federal communications policy. "But most will be introduced a bill in the Vermont House that would repeal a new law requiring broadcasters to report reimbursement fees to the attorney general."

Condon says he's simply trying to protect taxpayers, who would be on the hook if a broadcaster sued the state over the law. Though he says he did nothing wrong by introducing the bill, he plans to refrain from voting on it if it reaches the floor.

"I think it's something the legislators has to discuss and learn about," he says.

Eves Deen, the chair of the ethics panel, finds his legislative and professional roles overlapping. Outside the legislature, he works as Upper Valley river guide for the Connecticut River Watershed Council. In the legislature, he chairs the House Committee on Fish, Wildlife and Water Resources.

"For me, the test is Does [a bill] affect me individually or does it affect all of us?" he says. "If it sets up a grant program for the Connecticut River Watershed Council, I think will better receive myself."

But isn't his service to the legislature a valuable commodity to his employer?

"We don't trade on that," he says loudly. "I work for clean water. If you have a problem with that, we can talk."

Soon after Rep. **SAMBA BARTON** (D-Burlington) passed legislation last year to expand access to professional services, she watched by building Bright Futures, which advocates for early childhood education. As a regional coordinator, Barton says, she mostly steers clear of state policy—and in the House Education Committee, on which she serves, she discloses her day job.

If anything, she argues her time at Building Bright Futures has made her a better legislator.

"To the extent that my work informs and supports what I'm able to offer herein the building, I think that's away from that at all," she says. "I don't think the beauty of a lay legislator, to some extent."

Despite the influence and access it may provide legislative service isn't viewed as an asset by some employers. After leaving her last gig, Barton says, "It took me a year to find a full-time job so frustrating."

Sen. **DAVID WESTMAN** (D-Lensell) has found the same.

"What going to hire me when I'm gone from January to the middle of May every year?" he says.

Westman says that's one reason why, at age 55, he's still one of the youngest members of the Senate—and why low middle-income Vermonters can afford to serve.

Westman has made it work in recent years by managing a college savings program at the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, he says, he may never himself if related tax credits come up in debate, but he thinks it's asking too much for him to work elsewhere.

"You can't pay me \$10,000 a year and not expect me to want to work—and obviously almost no job that I can get where there wouldn't be some middle implication," he says. "After 17 years [in the legislature], if someone wants to dump me for the fact that I'm beating my eye off trying to do my job and come here, that's fine."

Unlike his colleagues in the House, Westman doesn't actually have to disclose his employment situation—or nor is his conduct governed by an ethics committee. That's because, thus far, the Senate has declined to follow the House's lead.

"We really haven't talked about it," says Senate President Pro Tem **JOHN CAMPBELL** (D-Windsor). "I really do believe that Vermont is one of the cleanest states." From an ethics standpoint, I can't remember the last time there was something that even came close to a question of someone's ethics" ☺

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Roundabout Winooski: Mayoral Candidates Vie to Lead a Changing City

BY MARK EVANS

Bill Norfield sat at a corner table last Friday at the MLC Ballroom in downtown Winooski, looking every bit the attorney on lunch break in a pressed jacket and a collared shirt, but no jacket. Norfield promised he'd be there — on the city's Front Porch Forum small newsmen — between 12:30 and 1:30 p.m. And he was, with his wife, Carrie, waiting for potential voters to come in and chat about his mayoral campaign.

A current resident stopped by and pulled up a chair. Norfield, a history buff, was eager to establish his Winooski roots. "I grew up 400 feet from here... My grandfather had a vegetable garden there — we're talking 1913," smooth-talking Norfield told John Ames Brown, he had engaged Ames on current issues such as parking and development.

Hours later, Norfield's opponent Jerh Leonard, was guest of honor at a downtown house party. Morgan Rice had hosted the meet-and-greet that attracted 10 people, including longtime locals and newcomers from Ithaca who had recently arrived in Winooski. As guests pulled at a fruit platter, Leonard passionately expounded on Winooski's zoning and planning roles.

"You dream about this stuff," one woman exclaimed, joking about her enthusiasm.

Leonard, wearing baggy khakis and a dress shirt unbuttoned at the sleeves rolled up, greeted each guest with the zeal of the new kid in school trying to make friends. "How long have you lived here? Nine years? Oh, wow?"

Both candidates listed their race for mayor shouldn't be viewed as a battle of old versus new. But they understand why voters may see it that way.

Norfield is 61. His family has lived in the city for three generations, and he served as mayor for most of the 1990s. "I've been here forever, but that's not my qualification," Norfield said.

Leonard is 42. He moved to the city three years ago and currently serves on the city council.

"I'm not 18's oldest child, and not personality as new teenage-aid," Leonard smiled.

But as they compete to spend the next three years representing a rapidly evolving city, the size difference in their level of experience has emerged as a central distinction.

Norfield said he has the know-how to pull the levers of government and make progress.

Leonard cited more recent experience. He has spent the past two years as the city council's leading change agent: unseating the city's one Norfield ally in 1999, shortly before Winooski's then-sleepy downtown filled up with bars and restaurants, apartments and condominiums. The former old woods road in which immigrant children labored was then a mostly abandoned shopping mall.

The city's population has grown 11 percent since 2000, even as many Vermont communities have shed residents. Young professionals and refugees — from Bosnia, Somalia, Nepal and Ithaca — have moved in. Roughly 60 percent of Winooski's households have at least one nonwhite speaker. The students in the Winooski School District hail from 36 nations and speak 31 languages.

POLITICS



I'VE BEEN HERE FOREVER,
BUT THAT'S NOT MY
QUALIFICATION.

BILL NORFIELD

Business sharply divide the candidates. But they each have their priorities and would bring different points of view to a job that, in Winooski, is largely ceremonial.

Unlike in Burlington, where Mayor Miro Weinberger is the boss at neither large and small in city hall, Winooski city manager Katherine Decoreau runs the city's daily operations, supervises staffers and cracks the city's budget, which councilmembers approve. For that, Decoreau earns \$100,000 a year, while Weinberger makes \$92,000.

The Winooski mayor gets an annual stipend of \$12,000.

The job description isn't glamorous, either. The mayor heads the five-member city council, which directs the city manager and sets the agenda for council meetings. Technically a full voting member of the council, the mayor historically only votes to break ties or to make a statement on an issue of particular importance. The mayor also serves as the primary liaison between the council and Decoreau.

There are no wards in Winooski. Each city councilmember represents all 7,200 city residents. The higher-profile mayor is the *de facto* face of the city, the primary point of contact for anyone looking for an ear to bend. "The mayor is looked at by kids as the highest political official in the city," said Mayor Mike O'Brien, who declined not to seek reelection. "People look to you, people ask you the questions. You act as the spokesman for the council and the city."

Norfield knows this. He served as mayor from 1991 to 1997, and would have continued as the office's last Chief Executive not defeated last fall by devoted the years that

followed, to growing his fledgling legal practice. Norfield is a defense attorney who has represented some high-profile criminals, including Philip S. Arles, a musician convicted of killing a homicide victim in South Burlington in 2011. He also handles cases on family and civil matters.

When O'Brien, who succeeded Burlington, announced recently that he was going aside after eight years, Norfield decided he wanted back in.

"I'd rather be part of getting things done than sitting there asking for things to be done," Norfield said during a recent interview in his Main Street law office, a firm blocks from the downtown traffic circle. He said his experience with the law and the inner workings of city hall will enable him to turn ideas into action.

For example, Norfield said he thinks that he can persuade the leaders of the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival to stage a concert in Winooski, bringing hundreds of people to the city, an act that when he was mayor, And he wants to introduce traffic-calming measures to help reduce the little-used park in the corner of the downtown roundabout.

"These [hundreds of] little things," Norfield said, "become a conductor, you're a facilitator, and I know who to talk to and how to get things done. If I can't get an answer, I know where to find it."

Thash Pham, who opposed Norfield's Adam Markin in 2010 and later a nearby moment bearing the same name, has occasionally relied on Norfield for legal advice. He displays a Norfield campaign sign in the front window of his restaurant. "He is a good guy," Pham said. "It's got a lot of sense. It's going to be good for everyone in the city."

Norfield's signature campaign initiative is a proposal to form an alliance with public housing and affordable





Seth Leonard

IT'S REALLY
IMPORTANT
THAT WE
LOOK FOR
PEOPLE WHO
REPRESENT
TODAY'S
WINOOSKI.

SETH LEONARD

housing nonprofits like the Champlain Housing Trust. He wants to convert dozens of Winoski's rental apartments into condominiums.

Norfolk said that the city is being held back by the fact that 60 percent of the city's housing units are rentals. Encouraging home ownership, he said, would allow lower-income residents to build their assets and, in turn, they'd be more invested in the city.

"The rental ratio is very unhealthy," Norfolk said. "You can't change that in three years. You can start, though."

His plan, Norfolk conceded, is not fully formed. It would "probably not" involve an investment of city money. Rather, the city would encourage other groups to convert rental units to owner-occupied homes. "This is not new. It's just not done here," Norfolk said.

More than 28 percent of Winoski residents live below the poverty line. Just a few blocks from the banking downtown square, apartment buildings show signs of neglect. Forbidding trash accumulates in tiny yards, windows are left broken.

Leonard works for the Vermont State Housing Authority, which provides housing to low-income residents. He served on the board of the Winoski Community Partnership and helped launch the farmers market in 2012. He's been during the growing season, residents flock to a grassy lot next to the traffic circle to buy farm products.

Leonard is an Indiana native who moved to Vermont nearly a decade ago to volunteer for former governor Howard Dean's 2004 presidential campaign. He lived for several years in Burlington while he

worked at the Opportunities-Credit Union in downtown Winoski. When he and his fiancée decided to buy a home in 2011, they chose the Green City.

"It was a community we fell in love with. We were a part of before we even moved here," Leonard said during an interview at Bond & Co., a downtown coffee shop with high ceilings and wood floors, where he's been meeting with voters on Friday afternoons.

His job at the credit union, which involved work with community groups, soon drew Leonard into local politics. He'd lived in Winoski for fewer than two years when he won a seat on the city council in 2012. Now, Leonard said he's ready to lead the city.

"It's really important that we look for people who represent today's Winoski," Leonard said. "It's different. I believe I have my fingers on the pulse of what's going on in the city I've worked hard on."

Leonard said he has been part of an effort to stabilize the city's finances. Since the mid-1990s, Winoski has run budget deficits. In 2010, the city laid off three employees to balance its books. Recently

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Vermont Lottery Rolls the Dice With Gambling Machines in Bars

BY TERRY HALLEMEYER

Last November, Shooter's Saloon in St. Albans acquired its first Touch-Play lottery machine. The gray, 5-foot-tall console looks like a hybrid arcade game and automated teller machine. After feeding it cash, players can try the video gambling game King's Gold and Bank Builders—or buy a commercial lottery ticket, such as Powerball and MegaMillions.

Shooter's owner Doug Grevatt welcomed the chance to become one of 28 Vermont proprietors to host the game last fall. A few months in, Grevatt said the Touch Play is "kind of boring" but that it's pulled a few \$100 winners and brings in a little money from the bar's commiseration.

Vermont Lottery executive director Greg Smith said sales from the games have grossed more than \$10,000 per week at each location, but he declined to say how much profit the consoles have brought into state coffers after little more than five months of operation.

Despite potential profits, some feel that lottery games have no place in Vermont bars, and were discouraged to learn that many had already been installed.

Last year, the Vermont House voted to ban the practice, but the bill languished in the Senate and never became law. Meanwhile, the state lottery commission dropped all Touch Play proposals at Shosters and other pubs, including Tilley's in Colchester. T. Rugg's in Burlington and Miller's in Winooski, before the year's end.

"We were a little surprised, given the fact that the House had taken a vote against putting these machines in bars and restaurants," said House Ways and Means Committee chair Janet Ancel (D-Colchester), who sponsored the bill. "The House was pretty strong on that."

But Gov. Sherrin approves of the new in-bar games and has a plan for the profits. His administration wants to send at least \$1 million of the revenue to the state's general fund to help finance the Vermont Veterans' Home in Burlington next year. The house has long been in search of a new source of funding.



I'M NOT SURE DRINKING AND GAMBLING OUGHT TO MIX AS A SOURCE OF REVENUE. I JUST THINK IT'S A MISTAKE.

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE CHAIR JANET ANCEL

Sherrin defends the use of lottery money for socialization expenses, saying it's essentially new money. "If this was not new revenue created by a new program, the governor would not have proposed it. He does not support using existing revenues, assume that flow into the ed fund for purposes other than funding education," spokesman Scott Cavallaro said.

If Sherrin has his way, this would be the first time since 1998 that lottery money would go to anything other than the Vermont Education Fund, a fact that is not lost on Ancel. While she's unsure of whether she'll try again to banish lottery games from bars, she is confident that legislators won't approve using lottery proceeds for anything unrelated to education.

"He totally ignores it, 100 percent," said House Speaker Ship Smith (D-Morrisville). "I don't like expanding

gambling, and I do not believe it's appropriate to divert profits from the education fund."

The lottery proposal is one of several Sherrin has made this year that legislators are resisting. Others include his plans for a 0.7 percent general tax to boost Medicaid reimbursements, a fertilizer tax to finance waterway cleanup and the consolidation of emergency call centers.

Speaker Smith said lawmakers will find another source of revenue for the \$1 million Sherrin has budgeted for the veterans' home. "This is an area where we will definitely have to do that," Smith said. "That's a nonstarter, as far as I'm concerned." Sherrin has repeatedly said that those who don't like his funding ideas are welcome to come up with their own, Corbett noted.

Lottery ads have long urged users to "Please play responsibly" and have touted the fact that "All profits go to the Vermont Education Fund." Lottery director Smith argues that by using the games in bars, the state is still playing responsibly. And, he says, the money that would go to the veterans' home would be almost entirely separate from that collected at traditional outlets, such as convenience stores, which would continue to go to the education fund.

"I don't think there's anything wrong with saying lottery profits go to Vermont veterans and the Vermont Education Fund," he said, adding that in most states such money goes to more than one source.

Corbett said the governor will continue to monitor how having in-bar lottery games is working.

Ancel has concerns beyond gambling in bars, she questions whether Touch Play will deliver the promised revenue and worries that the games will divert money from the education fund by cannibalizing proceeds from other Vermont lottery games.

The legislature's Joint Fiscal Office told the House Ways and Means Committee recently that sales from the console games "will likely reduce existing revenues from the lottery to the education fund."

The lottery is projected to raise \$249 million in the next fiscal year.

The lottery director conceded that the machines could hit some halfway from other lottery agencies, as customers might choose to buy Powerball tickets in bars rather than at convenience stores. "I expect there will be a small percentage of overlap," he said. But the machines don't offer scratch-off tickets, which account for 75 percent of lottery sales and should be unaffected by the new outlet, Smith said. People who use the machines are probably there to play interactive inside games such as Cash Hunt and Cover All Bases, he said.

He maintains that the Vermont Lottery has the authority to launch new products at new locations. According to Ancel, state law is silent on whether bars and restaurants may serve as lottery agents, but that for 40 years such venues were not included.

At Shooter's, Grevatt said that Vermont "needs to get in the 21st century." His customers, he noted, are traveling to casinos in New York, Quebec and Connecticut. The state of Vermont is "missing out on revenue," he said.

One lawmaker—Rep. Ronald Hubert (R-Milton)—has introduced legislation to authorize the construction of a casino in Vermont. The chances of that bill passing? Don't bet on it. ☐

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Roundabout Winooski

though, the city got two clean bills, according to Winooski officials.

Leonard said he led the council's effort to bring the city treasurer position under its purview instead of the city manager's. The bureaucratic shuffling will help ensure that the treasurer is independent of other city hall employees and gets unadorned information to councilors, Leonard said.

The next major should be devoted, he said, to an effort that has been quietly proceeding in city hall for months: preparing for future development along the three gateways to the city. Officials eventually plan to tear up existing zoning regulations and replace them with more flexible guidelines to encourage development while regulating the physical appearance of projects. The effort targets areas that have languished while the downtown surged.

Though he did not offer specific policy proposals, Leonard displayed a genuine enthusiasm for the various commissions that have been assembled to help guide the process. He is nearing a bridge-builder who could unite the city's diverse constituencies behind a common vision. In his campaign literature, he refers to his governing philosophy as "ONE Winooski."

"You've got to do a lot of listening and hear a variety of voices," Leonard said. "I don't just hear, I listen."

He may listen, but he said his opponent isn't saying much about an issue that's front and center in Winooski — the Pentagon's decision to base F-35 fighter jets at Burlington International Airport in 2010. In a nonbinding referendum that will be on the ballot March 3, residents will be asked whether they want to join a lawsuit fighting the move. An anti-F-35 group petitioned to put the question on the ballot.

Since local residents, including that from Winooski, lost the U.S. Air Force in federal court last year, seeking to prevent the planes from coming to Vermont. They claim the military failed to perform required environmental reviews. Activists had fought for permits to block the jets, citing the noise levels caused by their takeoffs and landings. The F-35's so-called "noise zone," will affect 6,600 local residents, including many in Winooski.

The article urges the council, which has the authority to make the final decision, to join the plaintiffs in the lawsuit and to contribute \$75,000 — roughly \$1 per resident — for legal bills. No other communities are currently a part of the

lawsuit, which is still in its early stages and could take years to resolve.

James Dumont, the plaintiff attorney, said Winooski would be a welcome addition to the case. The city would not be on the hook for any additional payments, Dumont said.

Debate about the F-35s and the noise they generate has dominated the Winooski Front Porch Forum for months. Last week, 41 local city members held a press conference in the city urging Vermont's political leaders to reconsider the housing decision.

"Now that this matter is going to be adjudicated in a court of law, we urge you to reconsider your support for what is a highly questionable endangerment of Vermonters and the imposition of a financial burden on the most economically and socially vulnerable of our neighbors living in the Flight path of these jet-to-be-bully-tested fighter-bombers," they wrote in a letter.

Rabbi Joshua Chazin said they hope to persuade Winooski voters to join the lawsuit.

As for Norfal and Leonard? Winooski's mayoral candidates have admitted from discussing the issue on their campaign websites, and have responded to questions from the media with lengthy, complicated answers.

Norfal said he does not support joining the lawsuit, viewing it as an unnecessary expense. But he said he would carry out the wishes of the majority of voters if they support it. "Functionally, it's more than just money," Norfal said. "I'm going to consider it a mandate."

He said he would rather try to persuade Vermont's congressional delegation to force the military to conduct a new environmental review.

Leonard refused to declare a position on the referendum, though he said the rest of the council voted unanimously against the planes in 2012. He said he had questions about the Air Force's plans, but declined to say how he would vote on the ballot article or whether he would support joining the lawsuit as mayor if voters approve the article.

He was more focused, he said, on ensuring the diverse city.

"I believe Seth is a person who isn't tied to one agenda or group," said Blaine. "There's so many different segments of Winooski...he wants to move forward." ☐

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No Small 'Change': A \$1.5 Million Education Grant Hangs in the Balance

BY ALICIA FRIESE

The Burlington School District appears to be regaining its balance after a turbulent 12 months of leadership conflicts and fiscal disorder. Former critics have begun to praise the school board and interim superintendent Howard Smith for his efforts in the last three months to mend relationships and clean up the books.

But last year's drama did not escape the attention of a foundation that funds a multi-million-dollar project in the Burlington and Wisconsin school systems. When the two districts applied for a second round of funding in the fall, the Massachusetts-based Nellie Mae Education Foundation postponed a decision "because of the absence of a permanent superintendent of schools and the attendant changes to the ecology of the Burlington School System," according to a statement emailed to *Seven Days*. "Stable and supportive leadership at multiple levels is a critical component of this...initiative and is a major factor in our decision to fund work in school districts," warned Nellie Mae senior program officer Jessica Iyobon.

In other words, Burlington and Wisconsin could both lose out on the next \$1.5 million installment of a \$5.25 million grant that was meant to last six years.

It's not an idle threat—Nellie Mae put the brakes on a similar initiative at the Burlington School District in Maine, after declining its subsequent request was unapproved. The *Bangor Daily News* reported that a group called Maine Parents for Transparent Education Policy objected to the initial grant in 2012 on the grounds that it pushed an "agenda" without sufficient input from parents.

Founded in 1980, Nellie Mae is a philanthropic organization whose stated mission is to "stimulate transformative change of public education systems across New England."

Here in Chittenden County, the foundation's work has turned to education initiative into a political hot potato. The people who administer the grant have raised some eyebrows by turning their educational efforts to voters—in elected school officials—in advance of Town Meeting Day.

The Partnership for Change launched in 2012 with an initial \$3.75 million. Nellie Mae said that the two school districts were together New Burlington High School and the Wisconsin middle and high schools are three years into the project, which aims to mend the way kids are educated. The end goal is to give students more control



Quincy King teaches at Burlington High School.

over their course work and evaluate them in a more meaningful way.

A chunk of the change was used to "try them" for teachers who want to test new methods. During the first two years, that meant substitutes for educators to rethink their approaches. Faculty had to apply to be "followers" and most who passed seemed to be on the young side and eager to try new ideas.

This year, the partnership funds nine "partner teachers" in Burlington and all in Wisconsin to maintain their regular teaching schedule—minus one class. They use the extra time to redesign their courses, and meet regularly to share ideas about how to give students more autonomy and to ensure that they all master certain essential skills, regardless of ability level.

At the Clark in Wisconsin, students lead independent projects, which have ranged from recording hip-hop albums to writing self-help books. At BHS, students take a two-week course at the end of each semester that have included computer game design and farming.

The partnership also works with different organizations to get parents and community members more engaged with the schools. For instance, it developed a "family-friendly" report card with the Parents and Youth for Change to make it easier for New American families to use to track their children's progress. Color-coded visuals show how close students are to college readiness.

It's not uncommon for New American teenagers—and their parents—to arrive in the United States without being able to read or write. Even within their daily

English Language Learner classes, the range of literacy is huge. Partner teacher Quincy King and Beth Evans, who teach ELLS at BHS, noticed many students were coping by copying classmates' instead of getting the help they needed to catch up.

So the two teachers created a class called *Excel!l* (Excel/lence for English Language Learners). The newly arrived students spend 10 minutes each day learning "survival English" and adapting to an American style of schooling.

ARE YOU JUST AN EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE OR A POLITICAL INITIATIVE?

SETH SHUMSKI, BURLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

In an *Excel!l* class last week, Joseph Muehl, who arrived from Congo in November, and Chao Levin, who came to Burlington from Thailand in September, practiced talking about the weather. At first the word "blizzard" tripped them up, but after googling photos of the word, they got it. Sharing an iPad, they recorded a video in which they took turns saying, "This is blizzard. I don't like blizzard!" and then crunched it across the room to King. At a nearby table, Shabab Kadzair, 16, and her sister, Mary, 18, carried on a halting conversation. They arrived from Iraq just five months ago.

This class—which includes remedial-math exercises and other less traditional approaches—helps make refugees feel comfortable in a foreign academic setting, according to Evans. (Of course, which involves lecturing in the current moment through translation or other techniques, is meant to help people concentrate and regulate emotions.)

Once they master 11 categories of conversation—which include weather, shapes, alphabet and introductions—they move on.

Evans and King also visit students in their homes to meet their families and learn about their needs. Without the extra time provided by the partnership the two women said, that would be impossible.

Similar principles of "proficiency-based learning" apply in a sixth-grade classroom. One class co-taught by partner teachers Niala Bech-Conger and Jocelyn Fletcher. If a student fails a vocabulary quiz, instead of moving on to the next assignment, the student signs up for a "collabor" to try again until he comprehends. In other words, the teacher never gives up on a student.

In the same spirit the class is integrated—meaning would-be honors students learn alongside less advanced students. Bech-Conger and Fletcher have designed an "embedded honors" system, in which the less-skilled go on ahead and beyond without being segregated into different classrooms. A few students were drinking cartons of chocolate milk as Fletcher projected pictures on a screen that showed how many students were "proficient" in certain skills such as annotation and vocabulary. "I'm pretty pleased about the growth I'm seeing," she told the class.

During the early years, it was the teachers who needed coping, recalled the partnership's director, Hal Colston, one of three staffers who administer the Nellie Mae grant. "There was a lot of effort to be a partnership with a capital 'P' and to benefit ourselves," said Colston, who founded the Good News Garage. As a result, the "teachers resisted as if we were this third-party entity helicopter-ing."

Now, though? "I believe that both districts are owning this work," Colston said. "There is so much passion and excitement because they have the space and time to practice their teaching."

Refracting teachers agree. At first, Fletcher said, "A lot of it felt really pie-in-the-sky and philosophical." We had no idea how that was going to go. We took it into the classrooms." But this year, she noted, "There's been a huge moment when kids"

BURLINGTON NEEDS TO GROW

Burlington is a city without enough housing, and it needs to grow ("Way to Grow" February 11). Off Message ("Burlington College Sells Off Much of Its Land" February 13). Green space is good, but it is not the only thing Burlington should be a place that is open and welcoming to all, unafraid of change or new ideas. In the Old North End, recent development has brought new experiences and opportunities.

Instead of being welcoming, interesting and dynamic, the Burlington College property, and the dozens of lots before it, has been autistic, barren, boring wasteland. With the right mix of housing, business and open space, development can turn it into real urban space that brings opportunities, new people and new experiences.

The lack of housing is a crisis that has been needed for too long. It drives up taxes for home owners and makes it impossible for people to move here unless they have money. It drives low-income people out of the city as new residents pay more money than ever what used to be affordable neighborhoods. With the lake and parks to the north and south, Burlington does not need more open space. If you cross North Avenue from the Burlington College property and built out, you will see a vast open space called the Internette. It offers trees, grass, fountains and open vistas, yet it is part of Burlington.

Burlington College needs an opportunity to grow and thrive as well. Its plan will add to the urban environment and create a new, interesting and livable space for all of us. I hope it happens.

Tom Garrett
BURLINGTON

POOR EXCUSE

Mayor Miro Weinberger's suggestion in "Way to Grow" (February 11) first has administrators in paying attention to other Burlingtonians besides its poorest residents rather arrogant, to say the least. His subsequent belief that increasing the overpriced housing market will somehow become less expensive if his developer friends build more dwellings for the young professionals he wants to attract defies basic history. Unless there are rent controls, it doesn't matter how many apartments and condos are built — the cost will always be high. The free market does not create affordable rentals. However, it does create profits for those who end up with the rent.

Ben Jacobs
MIDDLEBURY

BAD AD

Yermont's Independent Voice? Why do you allow an American Apparel ad on the back page that is child pornography? Not cool, "Independent Voice."

Margaret Clark
MIDDLEBURY

I know this isn't the first time Seven Days has received feedback regarding American Apparel ads. Last week's ad in particular features a girl who barely looks 13 being seductively in her underwear and training bra. I notice the model is 16 years old, barely legal, but we all know that she was chosen because she looks much younger. Really, Seven Days? Really? How socially responsible is it to perpetuate the sexualization of young girls? Do you need the advertising money that badly to sell out like that? As a woman, and mother of a young girl, I am furious that you find this acceptable.

AnneMarie Lavolette
COLCHESTER

I often look forward to reading your progressive publications, but I was surprised and disappointed to see last week's full-page ad of what looked to me to be a child in her underwear in a position that was sexually suggestive. I am all for the freedom of the press and expression, however, that of really pushing for the continued sexualization of girls.

For the father of a preteen girl and boy, and a social worker who works with many young women and men struggling to develop positive healthy relationships with their bodies. That includes boys formulating the way they think about girls and women. Publishing this type of ad undermines healthy images and what is it really worth the money to continue the sexual objectification of not only women, but to actually move the focus onto girls?

I look forward to hearing your response and, most importantly, to seeing you act responsibly and remove this ad.

John Evans
BURLINGTON

Regarding your back page on February 13. Good reference Dave Cheney, ousted CEO of American Apparel?

Robyn Schiff
MIDDLEBURY

No Small 'Change' by Jeff

to influence the election, and I have challenged them about this repeatedly."

When the North District candidates — current board member Josh Sheselski and challenger Mark Rowe — were asked on Channel 17 whether they supported the Partnership for Change, Sheselski responded with a question of his own: "Are you just an educational initiative or a political initiative?"

Only eight of the 16 candidates participated in the Q&A. An earlier attempt by the partnership to design a job-description for school board members — without naming the strong bond to weigh in — also failed festively.

Despite the aggressive outreach, others say they still don't understand what the partnership — actually led by Mark Ferraro, who joined the school board in June, said. "They are not very transparent to the board."

Cina disputed this observation — he said partnership staff frequently attend board meetings and have made repeated attempts to keep members in the loop.

"Having this great has put us ahead of the curve," said board member Lou Curry, who pointed out that

it's helping Burlington to meet new state mandates, such as the requirement that students develop "personalized learning plans." But in stark contrast to the partner teachers' perspective, Curry said that during the last year, "My sense is that it's lost some momentum." She attributes that to the turnover at the top — former superintendent Jo Anne Collins was shown the door last summer, and up until last week the district didn't have a permanent leader.

Evans, Curry and Combs both expressed confidence that Oberg would effectively fill that void and that the rest of the board will rally behind the initiative. Despite the concerns he and others have voiced, Cina said, "There has been a misconception that the board doesn't understand or doesn't care or doesn't support it, but actually I think the board as whole supports the real work of the partnership and supports the work of empowering teachers to do innovative work in the classrooms."

If the partnership is going to be more than a six-year experiment, their support

will be essential. It was never mentioned as a project with a start and end date — the whole point is for schools to continue the work even after the grant money goes away, integrating these new approaches into all classrooms.

Collins estimated that it could take 10 years to make that happen. And it might take making some controversial changes — a total shift in policy or even-based learning, for instance, might mean that some students who are slower to master certain skills would stay in high school longer.

Cina and the board will need to build the partnership's goals into its budget. "That's the way to sustain this," he said. "It can't just be that this approach that we keep doing."

Some people, like Curry, contend that doesn't have to cost more. Others aren't so sure. Sheselski, who also emphasized that he supports the work the partnership has done in classrooms, said he's concerned about the "hopelessness" that we will spend our own funds "once the grant ends. We have to feel comfortable paying up. Sheselski wants to see proof that the partnership's work has actually made a difference.

JESSICA SPHIN
MELUKE MAE FOUNDATION

FOUNDATION

There's no such hand-wringing on the other side of the Windsor River, where Union Clay school officials say they are fully committed to the endeavor. Superintendent Ben McMenamin says his district is at a point "where there's no turning back." They are making plans to maintain progress, such as the 11th and middle-school practices. The five school board members have proven "solid advocates" for the effort, he said.

Windsor underwent some tumultuous times several years ago, but these days its board is the picture of unity. In 2014 it won the Vermont School Boards Association's annual Award for Exceptional School Board Leadership. How can they feel about potentially suffering the fallout of the neighboring districts' dysfunction?

"We'll be patient with our friends next door, and whatever happens, happens," said board chair Michael Deane. "I'm not normally an optimist, but everything will work out." Collins said he expects the foundation will make the final post-election funding decisions this spring. ☐

Contact: ollie@sevendaysvt.com

What Happened to Vermont's Office of the Creative Economy?

BY KEN FIGARO

Technically speaking, Vermont's Office of the Creative Economy isn't going away. It just won't be as influential anymore.

That's the word from **LEE GOSSELIN**, commissioner of the Vermont Department of Economic Development, who confirms that the one-person office — "It's really just a cubicle," she notes — will remain unoccupied owing to state budget constraints. The OCE director's position has sat vacant since October 2014, when its last director, **LARI HANDELBLAD TORRES**, resigned to become executive director of the Burlington-based maker space **MAKERWORK**.

"Our goal is to continue the good work Lari started," Gosselein says. "But there's a challenge, too, in that 'creative economy' means a lot of different things to different people."

Indeed, the definition of that term has morphed in the four-year life of the OCE. The office was launched in 2011 with the goal of creating jobs and stimulating economic activity among Vermont's "knowledge workers" who produce everything from music to video games to documentary films. The office, born out of the

now-defunct Vermont Film Commission, was meant to broaden the commission's mission beyond just attracting film production to Vermont. It was initially headed by the VFC's then-executive director, **JOE BOORCHIN**, which helps explain the office's

early emphasis on filmmaking and other visual arts.

Shortly before Gosselein took her post in 2013 she says, the OCE was moved into the economic development department so it could focus more on "vocational drivers"

— that is, businesses with greater growth and hiring potential than filmmaking, such as software design, gaming, information technology and mobile development. After Boorchin resigned in February 2013, he was replaced by Torres, then a 53-year-old entrepreneur with solid tech credentials.

"Lari did a fabulous job bridging both these areas and really helped grow a network," Gosselein adds.

The OCE will still continue all its existing functions on a "limited basis," she says, including state sponsorship of technology-related events such as the Vermont Tech Job employment fair and HackVT, a 24-hour app-creating hackathon. The OCE's current staff of 11 will take on other OCE functions.

"We absolutely believe in the emerging creative industries in this state," Gosselein emphasizes, "and this is no way means that we are not going to continue to celebrate, support and mentor those industries. I can't say that loudly and clearly enough."

As for Vermont 2030, a state-wide comprehensive economic development strategy announced last June that identifies 12 "priority sectors" — including



Lari Handelblad Torres

PHOTOGRAPH BY JILL

Vermont Lantern Parades Punctuate the Darkness, Illuminate Community Spirit

BY ETHAN DE SEIVE

Turn by town, **GOWRI SAVOIR** is lighting up Vermont — literally. Since 2010, the Vermont artist has been one of the guiding lights behind Wardsbury's annual River of Light parade, a winter event in which residents promenade through town carrying thousands of homemade lanterns. The project is part sculpture, poor performance and wholly community based, and it's catching on. This year, Savoir will lead similar community events in Montpelier, Burlington, Ferrisburgh and Middlebury — with parades in the first two towns coming up this week.

Skilled in painting and drawing as well as sculpture, Savoir specializes in an unusual field: lanterns. She's currently in residence at Montpelier's Union Elementary School, where the teacher students to craft lanterns from various materials. Handcarpenter and fine-grained wood with balloons, yarn and coffee sticks, grades two and three with willow and watercress, and grades four and five with willow branches and coffee sticks,

the latter donated by Wardsbury-based Karing Green Mountains.

Savoir, 43, describes herself as "teaching artist," and her involvement with the lantern parades has educational as much as artistic motives. A student of Steve Tross, the collaborator in her lantern projects with her husband, sculptor and Norwich University art professor **ANGELLO ARNONE**, and with her friend **BOB HENLEY**, also an artist and teacher.

Money, as instructor at Wardsbury's Thatcher Brook Primary School, concerned of the first River of Light in 2009 and sought out artists for the project. Lantern parades originated in the United Kingdom,

and Savoir, who's from Manchester, England, had prior experience working on such events. She jumped at the chance.

The lanterns that Savoir and her students make take many forms. Some are figurative artworks shaped like birds or dragons, others are more geometrical or fanciful. Once illuminated from within and carried in procession, they call to mind a fairy-tale celebration.

The notion of making art accessible runs through Savoir's practice. "I've grown up in a tradition where people should not have to pay for art," she says in a phone conversation with *Seven Days*. "It should not be exclusive to those with money."

With support from arts grants, Savoir leads free, public lantern-craft workshops in which towns build a parade.

Three such workshops held an January weekend at **WATERWORKS ARTS** were "overflowed," says BCA education director **MEAGHAN STEVENS**. Stevins was delighted that more than 60 people turned out for the daylong craft workshops. Once fixed with LEDs, many of the lanterns carried them, she hopes, will be featured in Burlington's inaugural lantern parade this Saturday, which commemorates the 150th anniversary of the city's incorporation. "I think [lantern making] is a wonderful way to connect to a broad audience of participants to actually making something and having it have a purpose," Stevins says. "And a parade is such a wonderful way to gather people."

REBECCA KANE, the visual art teacher at Union Elementary with whom Savoir has been leading workshops, attended Wardsbury's River of Light parade in 2014 and was inspired to contact Savoir about a residency. By March 2015, all 445 students

IT'S EMPOWERING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROCEED THROUGH THE STREETS AT NIGHT, CELEBRATING WITH FRIENDS, FAMILY AND STRANGERS.

GOWRI SAVOIR

arts and culture, food systems, and health and software development — as prime targets for state resources.

Torres isn't convinced. Though he readily admits that some of his friends might be interpreted as "sour grapes," he says he doesn't believe the OCE ever got the support it deserved from the administration.

"I do feel that there was a much, much bigger opportunity than the governor ever got a chance to hear at [this] was ever communicated to him," he says.

Torres, who ran the office for about a year and a half on a \$100,000 budget, suggests that his vision of Vermont's 21st-century creative economy — as "essentially a freelance economy" — didn't jibe with the Agency of Commerce & Community Development's more traditional notion of economic activity.

Predominant in an arena Torres knows well is the creation of LOCAL 94, a networking and community events space in downtown Montpelier that opens in large part to the capital region's nontraditionals.

and freelance workforce. By contrast, he characterizes the state's vision of creative economy as looking more like a standard 40-hour-workweek job with salary and benefits in a bricks-and-mortar setting.

Torres says discussions of how creative might breed creative definition never gained traction. "There simply wasn't the right political climate to go out and get lucky," he adds. "At a time of tough budgets and new leadership, when the governor was singlehandedly focused on health care reform, there was a lot of reason to be risk averse."

JAP CRAVER, cofounder of KINGDOM COUNTY PRODUCTIONS, agrees. The Benet filmmaker suggests there's a "huge unexplored and undeveloped potential for Vermont's creative economy" and that state government should play a bigger role. Craver recognizes that Vermont can't compete with neighboring Massachusetts and New York, which contribute 25 percent and 30 percent, respectively, toward budgets of films shot in those states. Still, he says that Vermont could make things

easier for arts nonprofits, which are only marginally funded and taxed on the tickets they sell.

"I had several brainstorming sessions with Lars Torres," Craver says. "I liked Lars, and he meant well, but he had no real budget, so real authority and no real portfolio to make things happen. Without those, the best anyone could do is be a cheerleader."

Torres strikes a similar note. "I didn't feel authentic enough. Vermont's creative and saying, 'Tell me what you need' and then not being able to deliver anything but networking," he says. "Networking is fine. It's important. But it can't be the bulk of a state employee's, much less an appointee's, job. We need to deliver real benefits."

When asked about the OCE's lasting achievements, Goodale was reluctant to give credit to her department.

"Our role is to encourage an ecosystem," she says. "We're a little like the gardener who pours the water to make sure the plants are protected and growing. But they're the ones doing the growing."

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Montpelier's River of Life

will have had two lantern-making sessions, and they will carry their finished works in Montpelier on anniversary-the school's 75th. Referring to last year's parade in Waterbury, Kline voices sentiments that echo Steady's. "It was such a unique experience to be walking through the nighttime with hundreds of people carrying lights," she says. "It was just magical to see so many people come together for this celebration of art and community. It was pretty powerful."

People in the area, Steiner's and her students' lanterns can last a long time but the artist also appreciates in a more ephemeral art form. Rungt is an Indian folk art in which materials such as colored sand and grains are used to create geometric patterns on a floor; the finished works resemble Tibetan mandalas. Steiner has completed two Vermont residencies in maple one in 2004 at Barre's Integrated Arts Academy at H.O. Wheeler, and the other in 2012 at Knox Middle School.

The lantern parades themselves are ephemeral, lasting for just minutes. Steiner is drawn to such impermanence, saying, "I love when you are physically present at such events but are witness to their artistic power. A feast for the senses," she calls them in an email.

More than that, Steiner continues, "It's also empowering for young people, having the opportunity to proceed through the streets at night, feeling a momentous sense of ownership while celebrating with friends, family and strangers in a safe, supportive environment."

Ever the teacher, Steiner sees the lantern as a kind of "gateway" project. After a student builds one of the willow-and-coffee-filter "penned lanterns," she says, "they can build anything. The pennant is just a beginning. Once people start to group that the possibilities are really exciting."

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INFO

Union Elementary School lantern parade: Wednesday, February 16, 6 p.m., in downtown Montpelier at Burlington Northern parade street during February 13 to 20 parade week. St. Patrick's School: Farmington lantern parade: Friday, March 27, through downtown parade. Friday, April 12, through downtown.

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Street Art Climbs the Walls at Middlebury College

BY EIAN CHAND-MAREN



One time-painting: One installation, "Andy Warhol's 1967"

On a sultry afternoon in early February, Ben Elms stepped down from a tall ladder inside Middlebury College's museum of contemporary art, where he'd been painting the indoor entrance to the school's art museum with his signature colored typography. A UK native who currently resides in San Francisco, Elms is "one of the most in street movement's most established names" as a critic for the *Guardian* put it last year.

Elms got his start as a graffiti artist more than 20 years ago, "tagging things and generally being a little weird," he said. But, along with a handful of other international street artists, he has branched a career that brought him all the way to the walls of contemporary art galleries and museums.

"The stuff I produce now is far more thoughtful and far less selfish," Elms reflected. "Graffiti takes something away, for the most part, and street art and the stuff that I do adds something. I like it."

Elms regularly circles the globe painting with on canvases, and he makes a cultural object of tags and prints. His escapades to international fame when British Prime Minister David Cameron gave out his passport to the Obama during a visit in 2010. Elms also spent five years working with the better-known and more celebrated English street artist, Banksy.

The occasion for Elms' stop in Middlebury was the museum's major spring exhibition "Outside In: Art of the Street," occasioned by chief curator **DOUGLAS** and museum preparator **CHRY**

MURRAY. The exhibit runs through April 19 and features works by 16 internationally recognized street artists or street scenes, including Banksy, JR, Mist, Mike Pook, Shepard Fairey, Swann and Judith Joplin, along with documentary photographs by Henry Chalfont. Most of the works are on loan from private collectors but a few pieces have been acquired for the museum's permanent collection.

"They've just torn down all of the parameters of what it means to be an artist," said Donachie of the participants as she gave Steven Soto a sneak preview of the show. "That's why I think it's fascinating."

THE STUFF I PRODUCE NOW IS FAR MORE THOUGHTFUL AND FAR LESS SELFISH.

BEN ELMS

Why exhibit street art in a New England college museum? "We thought it was important to show about a contemporary development in the art world," Donachie said. "A lot of the artists shown here have the same social ethos as our students. They want to stop global warming. They see themselves as against the system, but it's a very interesting phenomenon, because they've been completely absorbed by the system. And there's just the complexity of the art world."

"Right now, the street art movement is one of the biggest movements in the world of art," Murray added. "There are so many artists out there. A lot of people walk around with blinders on, but whether or not you realize it, you see it. Even in Middlebury, you can walk down the street and if you look, you'll see students on signs. People don't realize it, but they're willingly a work of art."

The journey of street art from the "outside in" is, Murray noted, currently a hot topic. In this context, "it" means a position on gallery and museum walls, and the broader achievement of art-world legitimacy. And the artists themselves, Donachie pointed out, "all have a different take on it." "Some of them have really been appropriated, and some copy that," she said. "Some of them use their time, perhaps, to advance the causes they believe in. There's a great deal of authenticity involved."

The exhibit includes prints and paintings. There's also an actual wall covered in whiteprints posters rescued from Brooklyn, which Murray transported himself from the studios of Pook and Swann, and the indoor wall that Elms painted specifically for this exhibit, titled "Andy Warhol's 1967."

This was Elms' first trip to Vermont. Normally, he's commissioned to do work in urban centers, he said. The day after he completed his wall at Middlebury, he would head home to San Francisco for a brief rest, then to Dubai, then London, then Chicago, then London again. Elms said he wasn't quite sure where Vermont was before he arrived at the height of a

suburban blizzard, but he claimed to be "happy to be here."

"Luckily, we're here at a really cold time," he disclaimed. "We got to see snow, which is good. If we came and it was just another winter somewhere, it'd just be like..." he trailed off with a shrug. "But if we got here and it's like, 'Fuck! It's the coldest place I've been to!' it all makes it better. Oh, and I've got a cold! I've got the complete Vermont experience!"

The indoor wall Elms was commissioned to paint presented other challenges. His first thoughts on seeing it, he admitted with a laugh, were, "Those windows are big, and can we get rid of those curtains?"

Elms had originally planned to do a painted Andy Warhol portrait. But after encountering the wall, he reverted to his signature typography.

"One of the things that street artists and graffiti artists do very well is we think on our feet, and kind of work out what's best for the situation and the wall and the people that are going to look at it," he said.

What should the altered wall convey to Vermonters?

"A little bit of happiness, a little burst of color, a ray of sunshine," Elms said. ☺

Contact: elms@newdang.com

INFO

Outside In: Art of the Street through April 19 at the Regisburgh Gallery Museum of Art. Opening and talk by curators Emma Davis and Amyranda Murray on Thursday February 19, 6-8 p.m.; email us at middlebury.edu

QUICK LIT: FREUD'S DAUGHTER TELLS ALL

MARILYN COFFEY of *Murphy* has written a novel of psychological drama (quite literally) from the perspective of Anna Freud, the youngest daughter of the father of psychoanalysis. *Hysterical*, Anna Freud's story is fiction framed as a memoir that Anna has passed down to her most of 57 years, asking her not to unveil it until Anna's passing.

In reality, Coffey tells us in her introduction, the Sigmund Freud Archives may have such a document—but if so, the private foundation with legalists to Freud has elected to keep it under wraps.

But there's OK, because Coffey, in Vermont Public Radio commentator and contributor to magazines such as *Stonewall American*, grounds her tale in research, as attested in three pages of bibliography. *Hysterical* is an engaging story of Anna's struggle to become herself despite the machinations of her controlling father, complete with a concerning description of the Freud house's hold and its tensions. Coffey suggests that, despite Sigmund Freud's fame and the economic comforts he gave his offspring, this family went through hell. Much of it was the patriarch's doing.

Early in the book, in a scene set in Anna's adult years, she receives a warning about her father from Otto Gross [1877-1920], a psychiatrist living in Munich who believes bureaucracy is our natural condition and "reality is the ultimate self-expression." At a meeting in a cafe, he tries to dispel Anna's feelings of being sexually persecuted, calling her father the pervert, but Gross' obnoxious words, like those of Hanser's Phylactery, go tragically unheeded.

The reader follows Anna and her siblings through their early days as happy, adventurous children into various conflicts as their father's paternal preference as a man of letters and a luminary in the new field of psychoanalysis. At first, Anna letters at the law where Sigmund does his work, and then to her job, she is invited to be psychoanalyzed herself. She can't resist. As here that the drama of the book plays out.

In that new famous scene, full of the curiosity and enigma Freud saw as symbols, readers see something of Freud's famed relationship with Carl Jung play out in a sparring match between the two as they psychoanalyze each other. We learn that there may be no honesty in psychoanalysis, as both the analyzed and the therapist have agendas—and we're given reason to believe that, nonetheless,

psychoanalysis can sometimes get things very right.

We experience the stark contrasts of a household in which the mistress is so depressed she can't get out of bed while father and daughter take delight in Jewish humor (the book is sprinkled with jokes that typically enhance the themes). And we wonder if, in fact, there is a rapist living in the Freud home—or a victim of rape.

All this plays out while Anna tries to resolve her relationships with her father, her siblings, her sexuality and her future as the one chosen to advance her father's work. Further complications are Anna's debilitating "hysteria" and her father's refusal to accept her sexual preferences. Naming the book in first person, Anna conveys a forceful desire to please her father—even in analysis. "I lay there, rigid at my apparent embankment for self-destruction," she says of a session in which she has given her father a response he finds unacceptable. "The last thing in the world I actually needed that very night was an analytic session even more unpredictable than this entire set had so far proven to be."

Hysterical earns high points for its clever and realistic dialogue. Coffey also

offers enough multicultural language and references to convince the reader this is a cosmopolitan family without throwing a monolingual reader off the chase.

There is a hiccup in the pacing at the end of the book, where the writer seems to think we need to know everything that transpired in the final years of Anna's life. It more leisurely still through her final days and hours would have been less pining, as we have come to expect a closer, more revealing relationship with Coffey's protagonist.

Still, this is a novel that convincingly explains our role as self-examiners of the mistakes that wrinkle our gray matter, and maybe even our souls. I don't know whether *Hysterical* will make readers more likely to sign up for psychoanalysis or to run away. In either case, upon finishing the book, expect to have a personal reaction to the words with which Freud companionarily closed a session: "We have tunneled deeply today."

L. E. SMITH

INFO

Hysterical, Anna Freud's Story by Marilyn Coffey, the W.W. Norton Co., 360 pages, \$16.95, www.wwnorton.com

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Roger That

"**H**ey, Journalism — could you pick me up in Winooski and take me to my girlfriends' condo in Essex?" I'm at McKee's.

"Roger, Roger," I replied. "I should be there in about 10."

Roger was a new regular customer of mine, and I can't tell you how much pleasure I took from meeting to his ride requests with "Roger, Roger." He'd been using me for about six months, at least once or twice a week, to alternate between bars and clubs. He was employed in the skilled trades, mostly carpentry and painting, from the evidence of his work clothes. Like many a seasoned construction worker, he told me that, if called in, he could adequately perform most any job on the site. And he was a drinker — still young enough to pull off the day-working/high-boosting thing without totally breaking down.

One of Roger's quirks had to do with how he paid me for his rides. My protocol with all my customers — regular or random — is just what you'd expect: Payment is expected when we arrive at the destination. For some reason, Roger liked to pay up as soon as he settled into the cab's shotgun seat. And he wouldn't hand the cash to me, either, wincingly, he'd place rolled-up bills in the cup holder between the seats. This always ended for me as the way a paler laptop money for a hooker on the dock or nightclub — a discreet act, so as to hide the occasional commercial nature of the transaction. In any event, I'm nothing if not flexible, if that was the way the guy wanted to pay me, why not?

I pulled around the Winooski traffic circle and came to a stop in front of

McKee's. As usual, Roger came out in less than two minutes (which I appreciated). Dropping into the seat beside me, he said, "I forgot to ask, but could we stop at McDonald's on the way out there? I'm fracker' famished, and the girlfriend wants me to pick up food for her also."

This I had to do as a matter of policy as I putated before replying that food isn't necessarily all that fast, and although I could charge waiting time, stopping along the way for my significant period is a money loser for me. I make money when the transmission is in drive, not park. But it wasn't a very busy night, and the guy was, at this point, a bona fide regular, so...

"Sure, we could make a stop at Mckee's?" I said.

We sped along Route 15, passing the Fort before hitting a red light at State Wilson Road. For years, I told customers that the street was named after the woman who, back in the day, operated a brothel just past the corner of Kellogg Road. (That was the local recovered wisdom.) Oh, the embellishments I come up with on each rattling! That is, until some Seven Days reporter did a story about the real State Wilson that revealed the brothel tale to be a fanciful myth. Phewer, I thought as I read the article, reluctantly absorbing the debunking. A guy only has so many colorful tales in his quiver.

We pulled into the McDonald's across from the playgrounds. I asked, "Defer- that, or are you going in?"

"I'm going in," Roger replied, and I grabbed a parking spot. I didn't see him again for more than 30 minutes, or half the third quarter of the Celtics game playing on the radio. So, satisfied food.

As we took off for the short hop to Brinkley Road, Roger asked, "Did I give you enough?"

"Don't mean money?" Actually, you didn't pay me yet."

"What are you talking about? I put the money in the drink holder, like I always do. Twenty-five bucks?"

"No, I don't think you did, brother." I turned to see Roger's face content. He looked nearly unrecognizable.

"You're trying to rob me?" he accused. "Call the fackin' Essex police! Right now, call the cops!"

"Roger, relax, man. Let me count my money. I know I had 90 dollars before I picked you up."

I pulled over, my hand doing flip-flops. Did he paid me? I've well into middle age, the guy must be a grayer than I was. Maybe I'd just spaced out? I quickly counted the money. Ninety-three it was.

"Listen, I don't think you paid me, Roger. I know you usually pay me when you get into the cab, but you just didn't distract me."

"Call the cops!" he reiterated. "I paid you the piddamn money!"

At that moment, my course of action was clear: de-escalate. I had never seen this side of the man, but I inhibited he was

just confused, and not actually trying to scare me out of the fare. Not that his reaction wasn't disturbing.

"Roger, don't worry about it," I said. "I don't think you paid me, but we're not gonna fight about it. Let me just drive you to Brinkley."

My customer fumed for the five-minute ride, still convinced that I had tried to double-charge him. He stomped out when we reached his girlfriend's place. I didn't hear from him again until he called a month later.

"Remember, this is Roger. There's a guy here at Murry's — you know, the bar across from the train station. He needs a ride into town. Can you come get him?"

"Sure, thanks for the referral. I'll be there in 20. And, Roger — you know you can still call me, right? We just had a mis-understanding last month, that's all."

"Oh, sure. No problem. I've just been out of work for about a month. That's why I haven't called you — I haven't been going out. Don't get the green?"

I could easily have dropped this guy from my roster, but I trust my instincts. I think that accident at McDonald's was just Roger living a bad night. One thing, though: The days of cap-holder payments are over. ☺

All these stories are true, though names and locations may be altered to protect privacy.

INFO

Hackie is a twice-winning columnist that comes from Winooski, Vermont's post town. He writes for www.102.5fm.com and www.102.5fm.com.

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Dear Cecil,

I've been waiting for autonomous cars to become a reality. But I'm wondering how much revenue will be lost when there are no more speeding tickets, traffic violations, parking violations or probably quite a few other kinds of fines that I haven't even considered. How much money will state and local governments lose when traffic tickets become a thing of the past?

Jeff Grippo, White Plains, N.Y.

What I'm wondering is why you're even thinking about this. Derivation cars may well reshape the urban world — from the thing, autonomous cars sharing could wipe out taxis, buses and Ubers in a single swoosh — and you're focusing on parking tickets. Could you possibly have picked a more boring aspect of this development to analyze? But since you asked, yes: This particularly intrusive form of revenue extraction would be nearly eliminated in the event cars become autonomous.

As it stands, towing tickets is something governments do a lot of. New York City gave out more than a million in 2012. Roughly 25 percent were for blocked windows or seat belt violations (conspiring a rather New Yorkers are doing in their cars), but the rest were for infructuous that wouldn't exist if cars were autonomous: speeding, phone while driving, etc. Potentially this is an incredible boon for

states and municipalities — the NYPD's recent busy-bill strike against Mayor de Blasio cost the city \$10 million a week in parking-ticket money. It's hard to find an unrelated nationwide total for ticket-fine revenue, but (for example) Virginia relies on roughly \$97 million on speeding fines in 2009, scale that up to a population of 320 million and you get a national figure of about \$2.7 billion. If autonomous cars make that sum just go away, budget-conscious are likely to notice.

Google, the apparent front-runner in the race to driverless cars, claims their increased efficiency (in part because they can travel in a tightly spaced column, reducing drag) will offset any cost associated with being 90 percent faster. For example, the annual savings out at 19 billion gallons of gas and 4.8 billion commuting hours, for a total value of \$104 billion. I'm not sure I completely buy the details, but Google is concerned — one of the last few times I spent a

lot longer in Indiana than I intended — but undoubtedly the government would lose some money here, too. The current federal tax on gasoline is 18.4 cents a gallon, and the average state tax is 23.5 cents a gallon, so 19 billion gallons saved means a \$380 million annual loss in federal tax revenue and a loss of \$447 million for the states.

On the other hand, the total yearly economic cost of all U.S. motor vehicle accidents dwarfs both those figures — in 2010 it was \$277 billion. Derivation cars would probably have the occasional accident as well, but the most dangerous factors could be eliminated — especially drunk driving. Of the roughly 35,000 traffic fatalities each year in the U.S., about 10,000 result from alcohol impairment. On a pure dollars-and-cents level, that's a total loss of something like \$19 billion in future earnings that the government won't get to collect taxes on.

Additionally, the government savings on public transportation would be huge. The Chicago Transit Authority system gets about \$200 million in annual public subsidies, much of this could be eliminated if bus service, which runs up major losses, were replaced by privately operated fleets of driverless minivans. Other places on the balance sheet: the disabled and elderly would have greater taxable earnings potential because transportation would



be easier, and fewer Medicaid and Medicare dollars would be spent on those involved in car accidents.

The journey from a Google engineer's wet dream to reality is a long one, of course, and we've still got a ways to go before any of these considerations become relevant. Some don't think we'll ever get there. Elon Musk, founder of Tesla, is working on a driverless car, too, but he doesn't think the human element can be totally eliminated — his vision would be more of an autopilot feature. Google's autonomous car has covered 700,000 miles without incident so far around the Bay Area, but the programmers have fed it tons of data specific to local roads — it wouldn't work if you dropped it in the

middle of Tejiya. Google has preempted one obvious objection by saying it should be liable for any fatalities its cars incur, but plenty of unresolved questions remain. How will the car choose in a no-win situation — say, when it has to hit either a jogwalker or another car? Is there a cheat code to get the car to drive faster? Or can you trick the software into speeding by telling it your wife is asleep? If you're asking whether driverless cars are, on balance, sensibly worth pursuing, the answer is, definitely. It's barely like a while far call to play out, but if this thing winds up being half the big deal it could be, the change in traffic-ticket revenue is going to look like a rounding error.

INFO

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WATER WARRIOR



Lake Champlain's loudest advocate is also its most divisive

BY KATHRYN FLAGG

A year ago, Governor Peter Shumlin shocked Vermont — and the nation — by devoting his entire state of the state address to Vermont's aquatic predators. This year, he pulled another problem that has reached crisis proportions: the poor water quality in Lake Champlain. Despite significant investments, the governor conceded that Vermont's signature attraction is threatened by unchecked pollution. Thick blue-green algae blooms, sometimes containing toxic cyanobacteria, choke the most exposed bays and shorelines in warmer months.

As politicians wail, the governor included good news with the bad, touting off a long list of water-quality champions: Friends of Northern Lake Champlain, the Lewis Creek Association, the Franklin Waterford Committee for Lake Care, business owners, farmers and the "Stain of Lake Champlain" — *see*, Patrick Leahy.

Notably missing from the list? James Ehlers of Lake Champlain International, a nonprofit devoted to promoting "sustainable, drinkable, fishable" water in Vermont's largest lake. Under Ehlers' leadership, LCI has grown from an annual fishing derby into a formidable nongovernment water-quality reform.

Ehlers is a different breed of environmental advocate, purporting to speak for Vermonters who live downstream from the Montpelier "toxic." He commands a mailing list of some 25,000 anglers, sportsmen and other concerned citizens, and asserts to great effect. After a recent leak at the US Coast Guard station in Burlington sent as much as 300 gallons of sewage into Burlington Bay a few days before the popular Penguin Plunge, Ehlers sent an e-mail to his list with the eye-grabbing headline: "Burlington 'Toxicology' Murders... Into People!"

So his adherents, Ehlers is a fearless crusader for water quality, willing to speak truth to power — even if that poses off political opponents and establishment environmental groups in the process.

To his detractors, Ehlers is, at best, a

boastful ideologue. Some doubt his motivations, wondering privately if he's faced more by ego than environmentalism. Several clean-water advocates refused to speak on the record about Ehlers or his work, fearing retribution from Ehlers or his supporters for publicly criticizing his approach.

For plenty of his peers in the political world, though, Ehlers is all of the above: a tireless advocate and a showman, a master of press and politics, who is alternately Machiavellian and naive.

"The water quality crisis in Lake Champlain is beyond the mere of hollow political speech," said Patrick Berry, the former commissioner of the Department of Fish & Wildlife, "and James has the courage to say the things that need to be said — even if they're hard to hear because of the way he might say them."

Deadline Advocate

Whereas he can be, Ehlers is in a unique spot. The issue he's championed so ardently is seemingly, at long last, front and center in Montpelier. Politicians know they have no choice but to buckle down on water-quality measures, a 2008 lawsuit from the Conservation Law Foundation guided the Environmental Protection Agency into demanding Vermont's plan for Lake Champlain. Now the lake is holding the state's feet to the fire.

The EPA says Vermont needs to cut phosphorus pollution, which fuels blue-green algal growth in warmer months, by 40 percent — and way more than that in some portions of the lake. The agency said last fall that Vermont's plan to curb that pollution, crafted over months, didn't go far enough.

The EPA's aide, higher-ups in state government have to answer for the fact that the lake isn't any better off despite years of spending and political rhetoric. Last summer on Lake Champlain, the small and relatively shallow lake set for from Montpelier Bay, residents watched helplessly as thick, green sludge ponded on the lake into October. In Franklin County, St. Albans

James Ehlers ice fishing on Lake Champlain

selectboard member Bruce Chesebrough told the *St. Albans Messenger*: "This is a dream that can't stop burning." One incident with a camp on St. Albans Bay wrote in the newspaper saying the algal blooms were at "crisis level, and should be treated as such. Not stable, a hurricane, we need emergency management."

The fact of the matter is that after all the meetings, draft proposals and member counseling, Vermont doesn't have a strategy to clean up the most impaired sections of the lake. The EPA estimates Vermont needs to cut phosphorus pollution into the Missiquipi Bay by 35 percent in order to restore the bay's health. When a staff scientist from the Department of Environmental Conservation spoke to a local conservation group in 2013, he concluded his talk with a cartoon showing two mathematicians in front of a blackboard. Scrivelled midway through a complex equation was the phrase, "Then a miracle occurs." The cartoon was apt: "I think you should be more explicit here in this case."

It's a point that Elders has been harping on for months. When other environmental advocates lined up at a Statehouse press conference to draw their weight behind Shedd's plan, he arrived in his address. Elders wasn't present; he believed he purposefully wasn't invited. Instead, he turned to the press, where he is op-ed in the *Barnes-Messenger Times Argos* he chaired the chief executive for choosing policies over science.

"We need to send him [plan to succeed]," wrote Elders of Shedd's latest risk of proposals "that, really, it won't."

Working the Angles

Elders had to leave Gloucester early last Thursday morning to make it to the Statehouse in time to testify. "There's a lot of political intrigue right now of me being heard out of the debate," he said while burrowing down Interstate 88 in his blue Jeep, which he describes as a "piece of shit." EPA staffers jammed with paper shrouded the backseat with sea-fishing equipment.

"I didn't get into this to be politically popular," he said, squinting in the glaring sunshine of a mild February morning. "I do what I do to make a difference, not to make friends."

Once in Montpelier, he maneuvered the Jeep into a prime parking spot reserved for Associated Industries of Vermont — Elders serves on the pro-grow group forestry committee and calls them "friends." He gathered up his files — and naked his bare pectoral on the rear-view mirror of an accelerating sloop — and clomped his way into the Statehouse. Once in Vermont's coastal capital, he stuck out like a sore thumb in federal Gaultney gown, a flannel shirt and socks.

He headed up a narrow flight of stairs to the House Committee on Fish, Wildlife and Water Resources, where for the most part and a half-hour he weighed in on H.B. 26,



of two major water-quality bills under consideration this session.

In its current form, the bill is sprawling. Large sections focus on agriculture, defining the ways farm fields should handle nearby phosphorus runoff, and, for the time being, discussing explosives from the tax break commonly known as "current use," which taxes farmland on its agricultural value rather than as developed land. Other sections drill down into stormwater permits, basin planning and timber harvesting.

The bill also proposes the creation of the Clean Water Fund — though no one knows how it would be funded since non-water members attack Shedd's recommendation for an additional fee on fertilizers.

Elders spent much of the hearing going page by page through the bill, recommending tweaks to the language and various sections. He had had plenty of bipartisan suggestions. Require the use of so-called "best management practices" on farms statewide. Mandate stormwater retrofits on existing commercial properties of a half-acre or more. Don't limit the spreading of liquid manure on farm fields, but a outright.

As his testimony went on, you could see why Elders is viewed as a political outsider. Like a dyed-in-the-wool hippie, he cradled the rim of a composting toilet. He spoke about the possibility of capturing

and converting phosphorus into energy with a series of community digester systems. He envisioned floating, man-made islands on Lake Champlain's unpaired bays that could convert phosphorus in the water into plant matter.

Then, just so solemnly, Elders veered into the territory of the libertarians, arguing in favor of public-private partnerships and against handing any more responsibility or resources over to the existing bureaucracy, charged with enforcing water-quality standards, the agencies of agriculture and natural resources.

JAMES IS ALL ABOUT SHOCK AND AWE ON BEHALF OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

BOB FISCHER

"The hearing is from left and right, Republicans and Democrats," Elders told the committee members. "People are just fed up. This issue has been in the hands of an agency that denied there was a problem before a lawsuit — There have been gross government failures."

"Missiquipi Bay is burning," he said. "St. Albans Bay is burning. Lake Champlain is burning."

It's a metaphor he's used repeatedly in recent weeks. The state of Vermont is facing the equivalent of a house fire, and

quaffing over buckets of water instead of breaking out the fire hose.

'A Big, Big Personality'

While Elders' testimony was long, members of the Vermont Citizens Advisory Committee on Lake Champlain's Future, on which Elders sits, were clocking some free time with Shedd in the governor's emergency office.

Elders dashed in at the last moment, apparently late. After just a few minutes, Shedd left and his aides came snipping out of the office and down the nearby staircase, looking as if they were in a hurry.

Back out in the hall, Elders sidled up to a colleague, his blue eyes peeping with their usual intensity. Kudos visit, he explained what went on in there — how the governor sought him out for a handshake and positioned himself next to Elders for the group photo.

There, when the governor repeatedly whispered in his ear: "We need to get you back on the insurance."

Elders looked almost proud of the thinly veiled snub, which acknowledged both his importance and his rogue status.

What makes Elders so controversial?

For starters, his kind of big-person-theology — which is "bigger than big person," according to Kam Gossard, the water program director and staff scientist at Vermont Natural Resources Council — doesn't fit particularly well with the political landscape in which legislation and water-quality

Water Warrior

advocates analyze the merits of "accepted agricultural practices" and buffer zones.

"I tend to work very deeply on specifics" and Greenwood, an engineer by training, Elkins' approach, she said, doesn't necessarily align with "where we're all trying to get to. I've said to him, 'You've got some great ideas, but let's hear you get specific.' It's not his nature."

And then there's his demeanor. "He's a big, big personality," said Anthony Ierapigna, formerly a senior staff attorney with CLEI, one of a small number of organizations Elkins said he admires for its work on environmental issues. "It's hard to be a big personality in a small state and not have detractors over time."

"James is all about shock and awe on behalf of the environment," acknowledged Rick Fischer, assistant, Fischer serves alongside Elkins as the CMC and is the chief officer at Montpelier's wastewater treatment facility. Elkins' almost obsessive focus on sewage and wastewater overflow is one of his most persistent. Fischer said, but most know that he's not putting the finger at technicians; he's talking about a bigger problem of funding, accountability and infrastructure.

That said, "We don't always agree on his methods," said Fischer.

But Ierapigna, and Elkins' other admirers, believe that Elkins' approach is an important one in the advocacy world. The clean-water community Ierapigna said, has never liked for criticism its opinions on the state of the water, at their best, pull those concerns toward more realistic reforms.

The decade-of-the-two-party racks is not the best way to get involved in a lot of the best projects," said Ierapigna, "but if that's the role you have to play, that's the role you have to play. I've respected James for doing that, when he might have had a politically easier time if he were less vocal and vocal and public."

It's a role that could make environmentalists — if they're willing to learn how to wrangle a shark.

"The advocacy community has often struggled with recognizing the strategic value of each other's respective roles," said Berry, who now works at the Vermont Community Foundation. "If you consider your position to be more 'moderate' than James and CLEI, then you should use his work as a tremendous value in pulling the conversation in your direction."

From Long Island to LCI

The oldest of three boys, Elkins grew up on Long Island where it was still somewhat

rural. His maternal grandmother took over much of the child rearing after his parents' divorce, and Elkins and his brothers spent many summers at her cabin in rural Big Indian, NY, hunting and fishing and bushcrafting in the woods. The boys would collect pillowcases full of snakes and hunt bats by night.

"All of these things are highly illegal, right?" he recalled with a chuckle.

As a teenager, Elkins spent summers at a U.S. Coast Guard station on the Maine coast. That led to a novel scholarship to attend Williams University. The first in his family

he started a guiding service using a nickname he'd earned on the ski slopes. Uncle James, in 1970, Elkins received the grade of the year award from the Vermont Outdoor Guide Association. The plaque still hangs in the man cave in his unfinished basement — a spot he calls the "Babbar Side." Meanwhile, he had started contributing stories to Vermont Outdoor magazine, and found he had a knack for writing.

He took over as editor at the publication in 1978.

It was around this time that Elkins started working with Lake Champlain

\$616,632 in revenue and paid him \$84,569 in 2012, the most recent year for which tax documents for LCI are available. Under his leadership, the organization has branched out well beyond the derby — which has grown fourfold to attract 6,000 anglers a year — to advocate for dam removals and stream restoration, sponsor fishing mentorship programs for at-risk kids, and provide grants to after-school programs to introduce more kids to fishing. Working up on Vermont's lucrative mountain, Elkins single-handedly jump-started a conversation about Lake Champlain as a source of food, how to work with the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Working to get more chefs' involved about cooking fish from the lake.

Another idea — for a "zero-landfill-friendly" certification program for properties able to LEED certification for efficiency, or energy star for appliances — spun off into a separate for-profit company.

Elkins has made a name for himself calling out wastewater and sewage overflows, which he does religiously through the LCI e-newsletter. And he's become the go-to guy for Vermonters who might otherwise be wary of reporting water-quality violations themselves. He relays complaints directly to the Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets which is charged with enforcing water-quality rules on farms. He'll cite the agency in an any number of potentially problematic situations, among them, cows in streams, streams piled near farms or farmers spreading manure irresponsibly.

Luann DiStefano, the deputy director of agricultural resource management at the agency of ag, doesn't mind the intervention. "It's always been straight in the past which, frankly, I appreciate."

For many years, Elkins worked the equivalent of two full-time jobs, running LCI and editing Vermont Outdoors. He stepped away from the editorship in 2005 — but not before he used his considerable influence at Vermont Outdoors to rile up some of the state environmentalists with whom he battles often. The issue was the Champlain Lands deal, in which the state acquired a broad swath of northern forestland from a former paper company.

Elkins led the charge among opponents who were unhappy with the terms of the deal. From accounts from the six years Elkins was asking against "open spaces" (Champlain County citizens' environmental groups he described as "uninformed babies").

"Elkins was a huge pain in the ass," said Kevin Ellis, who lobbied at the time for a coalition of conservation groups. In the years since, Ellis noted, "it seems he's changed his spots."



James Elkins, in his "Babbar Side"

JAMES HAS THE COURAGE TO SAY THE THINGS THAT NEED TO BE SAID — EVEN IF THEY'RE HARD TO HEAR BECAUSE OF THE WAY HE MIGHT SAY THEM.

PATRICK HENRY

to attend college. Elkins had to scrimp his first choice of majors — physics — because the Navy wouldn't pay for a five-year course of studies. Instead, he studied political science and, upon graduating, went into active duty.

"I was going into the service because I thought it was a great way to make a difference," he said. Instead, he had what he described as an "unpleasant experience." Disillusioned, he left the service at 25 and headed north — first to Pennsylvania, then to Vermont.

A series of odd jobs followed. Elkins worked as a logger and as accident body armor around a farm. He made his hand at organic vegetable farming, and failed. "It's impossible to make money growing vegetables in this state unless you have a trust fund," he declared. He thought of a while in a middle-school science classroom.

Determined to live his own business,

International, doing some contract and volunteer work. The nonprofit got its start in the '80s advocating for cold-water fisheries in Lake Champlain, but by the time Elkins got involved, LCI was almost entirely focused on its popular Fisher's Boy fishing derby. "The derby became so successful that it eclipsed everything else," said Elkins.

But in late 1988, two years after Elkins started volunteering with the group behind the scenic drama prompted the longtime organizers to walk away. In early 1989, the former organizer handed over the group's calling list and made sure and Elkins and a few supporters set up a new nonprofit. He scrambled that spring to pull off the annual fishing derby. The plan was to spend a few years building the organization back up, then hand it off to the next director.

But in the years since, Elkins' work at LCI has grown from a volunteer, temporary gig into an all-consuming job that generated

The battle was ugly one, and Ehlers, by most accounts, was violent and unpredictable. But to his credit, many of his staunchest opponents from that era — including Steve Wright, a former Fish & Wildlife commissioner and the New England poacher organizer for the National Wildlife Federation during the Chapman Lands debate — say he's mellowed in recent years, and now speak admiringly of his work.

"My experience with James was that he was forthright" and Wright Now, he said, "I am pleased, as a writer advocate, that James has ended up where he ended up."

Down the 'Rabbit Hole'

A day after his appearance in Montpelier, wearing the same flannel and jeans, Ehlers was sitting comfortably among moose and birds in his Rabbit Hole Staked around him was enough fishing and hunting gear to stock an outdoor store.

Piled up, too, were the letters from signs from electronic post — more proof of Ehlers' emboldened refusal against any censorship. He's strangled far traditional Republicans and respected Progressives, for wild-haired Sen. Bruce Landers and good ol' boy Lt. Gov. Phil Scott. Ask him to define his politics, and he answers: "Catholic."

So Catholic, in fact, that Ehlers proposed to his second wife, Elizabeth, in the middle of moose, slipping a ring onto her finger as he took her hand during the traditional sign of the peace like thoughts it was a fitting way to honor the role faith played in their relationship. The priest wasn't around, what to Ehlers had been an earnest gesture — one he and Elizabeth remember fondly each week at mass — seemed innocent and disarming to the minister.

The penchant for irreverence carries over into social media, where Ehlers is a prolific poster of Facebook updates and commentaries. On his personal page, he relates strange political discussions, off-color comedy and inspirational quotes. Photoshopped over images — like the one he posted in February of Martin Luther King Jr., bearing the inscription, "A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus" — Ehlers' commentary read, "Let's get it done, folks!"

His wife tagged him on an image that read "I'm not an asshole. I'm actually one of the nicest people you will ever meet. You are just pissed because I can see through your bullshit."

Ehlers responded, "Thank you for the encouragement in Elizabeth's!"

"I feel like there's this perception about me that I enjoy not being upscabed," said Ehlers. He insisted it's not true and talks about his work as "building bridges." Two years ago ECI introduced the Blue Revolution Coalition, today, the coalition has 46 signatories, ranging from private

businesses to faith organizations and mainstream environmental groups.

Ehlers considers his advocacy a "moral obligation." Left to his own devices, he'd rather retreat to his camp in Putnam to hunt moose and teach his kids to fish. His two oldest children — 6-year-old Lillian and 4-year-old Edward — pruned good shots in this year's Yankee Sportsman's Classic. The couple also has a young toddler and a fourth child is due in July.

During a relatively old anecdote, Ehlers scribbled warily through Facebook photos from a fall hunting expedition. He spouted a video in which he — clad in camo and wearing a thick beard streaked with gray hairs — belted out into the northern woods, warning a moose toward a small band of merry humans.

"I take pleasure to bag a wild animal. I'll take a lot more than that to clean up Lisa Chapman."

Ehlers is holding off on passing judgment on the proposed legislation, though he's still stamping for a more ambitious advance than the state being handled down in Montpelier. He'll keep raising phosphorus capstone and conversion and talking up his floating islands. And he understands the game. If you want regulations on one-used pencils, ask for half-acre. If you want to tax Vermonters \$1 a week for a clean water fund, ask for \$2.

"They're building algae-powered buildings in Germany!" said Ehlers. "We flash the tank, and your sense and focus keep the lights on." If we could goggles to land on the moon in the 1950s, having no idea at the time how to get there, Ehlers would like to believe we can clean up our water.

But whether he has a seat at mass on control may have more to do with the politics of Montpelier than the issue of water quality. Asked about the governor's remark to Ehlers — "We need to get your work on the mountain" — Shuman spokesman Scott Correll said he wasn't in the room and didn't hear it, but "such a comment wouldn't surprise me."

"While there are different views on how to achieve the shared goal of cleaning up Lake Champlain, there is a broad coalition working together to make unprecedented work to secure the plan and funding to make a real start on the effort," wrote Correll in an email. "James is a true believer in the work to clean up Lake Champlain, but he needs to decide whether he wants to be part of the progress, even if he doesn't agree with every part of the proposal."

If he's being cut out of meetings, as he suspects, for his contrarian views, Ehlers takes that as a compliment.

"Thank you for acknowledging that I'm not willing to go along to get along," said Ehlers. In his mind, at least, the lake deserves more. ☺



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Vermont writer John Fusco immersed himself in the world of "Marco Polo" for the Netflix series

BY ETHAN DE SEIFE

Screenwriter John Fusco's surname is an acronym of "Italy"—an apt coincidence for someone who's been in the movie business for more than 30 years. Back in the 1980s, while still a New York University screenwriting student, Fusco twice won the now-defunct FOCUS (Films of College and University Students) Award. At the 1994 ceremony, when he accepted the award for the screenplay that would become the 1996 film *Crossroads*, master of ceremonies Bob Barker commented on the auspicious acronym.

Vermont-based Fusco recently switched his focus to the next wave of this delivery: online streaming. He's the creator and showrunner of Netflix's epic series "Marco Polo." With Bob and Harvey Weinstein among others, Fusco is also one of the show's executive producers; he was closely involved with its tight choreography and wrote or cowrote the first season's episodes.

Fusco has apparently found a winning formula, as "Marco Polo" was renewed last month for a second 10-episode season; he just finished writing the pilot. The show is now one of Netflix's top picks, as the company continues to develop original programming and upset traditional media distribution. In a recent interview with *Seven Days*, Fusco couldn't help gushing that the show's global reach evoked Polo's own global expeditions in the late 13th and early 14th centuries.

The first season, which cost a reported \$60 million and was shot in the high-resolution 4K format in a visual feast, shot in Italy, Malaysia and Kazakhstan, the episodes burst with gaudy, angry, the three most of Kublai Khan, epic-scale steppe, medieval Chinese plagues.

Fusco is currently writing several film projects, but he was especially excited to discuss "Marco Polo," which brings together several of his longstanding interests. In fact, Fusco admitted he identifies with his on-screen hero, not least because in researching the show, he traveled some of the very roads on which Polo journeyed.

Fusco lives in Lamoille County on a half-dozen acres; to accommodate a reporter's hell-to-no-heaven visit, when *Seven Days* visited, he offered hot green tea and a seat in a comfy brocade chair. His writing



CREATOR JOHN FUSCO WITH JOHN POLO ON THE SET OF "MARCO POLO"

room—all dark wood, overstuffed bookshelves and historical artifacts—feels like a 16th-century gentleman's parlor. Fusco jokingly calls him "the Taoist monk on the mountain." Fusco said it's a sobriquet he relishes. He clearly prizes his time at home, in part because he was far ahead for 35 straight months during production of "Marco Polo."

Fusco has an abiding interest in Asian culture. When he was growing up in Connecticut, he related, his father, a Korean War vet, told him about the incredible martial-arts ability of an old man who used to hang around the army base. Fascinated, the boy took up martial arts himself, which led to an interest in Shaolin kung fu and the philosophy that underpins it. Fusco's new prebend in that and just kung fu, the martial art founded by Bruce Lee.

"I would go off to catch him, or at the corner lot stop and read the teachings of Lao Tzu," said Fusco. "And then I would go to catch him, and it was just not connecting." He found himself drawn toward Chinese culture more than Christianity. "The astrology, the

herbal medicine, alchemy of immortality and the science of feng shui—it was all so fascinating to me," Fusco said.

The same was true of Marco Polo. "I loved the idea that there was this young Italian kid who had traveled further into China than any [person] before him," Fusco said. "He went there with some prejudice and was a dyed-in-the-wool Christian, and the experience opened his eyes. He became the first bridge between east and west, and I felt this affinity with this young Italian traveler."

That affinity never disappeared, but it did take a backseat as Fusco's screenwriting career took off in the 1980s. After *Crossroads*, he penned the next traditional Western: *Young Guns* and its sequel. An avid horseman and founder of a conservancy for rare horse breeds, he also scripted two equestrian films, *Sport Nation* of the Cassman and *Wildcats*. More recently, Fusco revisited his passion for martial arts and Chinese history in the screenplay for *The Forbidden Kingdom* (the first cinematic meeting of martial arts stars Jackie Chan and Jet Li) and in *Crouching*

Tiger: Hidden Dragon: The Green Legend, the forthcoming sequel to the Oscar-winning martial arts drama.

While Fusco was on location in China for *The Forbidden Kingdom*, his son reminded him about his longstanding promise of a father-son horseback trek across Mongolia. Realizing there was no better time, the two hired a guide and set off. "In my son was having all these conversations with our guide about the Mongol Empire, the name 'Marco Polo' would continue to come up," said Fusco. "And I realized that, in Asia, the guy was never a part on the victory of the accounts, like it is here."

The writer described "a perfect storm" of happenstance: the rebounding of his own fascination with Polo, a producer asking him if he had any material about warriors in China and his own growing interest in writing for television. For Fusco, the story of Polo's travels was a natural for a long-form TV series.

"It's as vast, because he was in China for 17 years. Marco was sent on official missions by Kublai Khan, and there's a rich, multicultural world with potential

multiple storylines," Fusco explained. Given Polo's death had pronounced that he hadn't recounted half of what he'd seen, Fusco also appreciated his tale's "latitude for creativity," which allowed the story to progress *terra vana* "tributaries."

Originally slated to run as the Starz network's "Mirco Polo" found a home on Netflix, where it is now viewable in all of North and South America and much of Western Europe. And Fusco was right: It's hard not to see parallels between Polo's globe-trotting and the show's hemispheric reach.

The episodes were shot in order, starting in Venice, in the home country of lead actor Lorenzo Richiery. "This unknown Italian kid who was cast as Marco started in Venice, in his comfort zone, speaking his native tongue," Fusco described. Once the production moved to central Asia, Richiery's growing assimilation reinforced the show's creator of that which Polo himself must have experienced.

The show is suitable for its visual luxury, which Fusco said was a consideration right from the start. The idea was to show "this big, sumptuous world

of Kubla Khan through the eyes of this Venetian traveler," he said. The show's locations, costumes and textures are appearing in an almost otherworldly way; the better to evade Polo's astonishment at what he found.

For a large and multifaceted show, "Marco Polo" had a remarkably brief shooting schedule: March to August 2014. By December, all 10 episodes were available online.

But the shoot was not without difficulties. An entire studio was constructed *ex nihilo* for the production in the jungles of Malaya — no small feat, several crew members, as well as Fusco's son, contracted dengue fever and had to be treated in one of three triage wards. And Polo's death of horses proved tricky for a show set in the equine culture of the Mongol empire. Fusco recounted how one of the show's horse wranglers had to round up "forgetter" and reintroduce animals and gradually train them to be conversant.

At times, production of the series in central Asia was halted by fierce windstorms that damaged sets and camera equipment. Out on the steppes, the show's cameras occasionally had to hunker deep to feed out and over.

A far more serious setback occurred when the show's assistant martial-arts

YOU GO OFF TO MAKE A SHOW LIKE THIS, AND YOU'RE IN THIS BUBBLE. IT'S VERY UNREALISTIC.

JOHN FUSCO

choreographer, Ju Kuo, went down with the rest of the passengers in Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, which crashed in the Indian Ocean. "Our crew was just devastated,"

replied Fusco. The series' second episode is dedicated to his memory.

Fusco told a story about the chilly reception that Marco, his father, Niccolò, and his uncle Matteo received upon returning to Venice after 17 years abroad. As the story goes, he said, "They realized they were dressed like Mongols, they'd forgotten how to speak Italian, nobody recognized them."

The writer finds in this tale another parallel: between Marco's life and his

own. "You go off to make a show like this, and you're in this bubble, it's very unrealistic," he said. "Your world is suspended in this fiction, and the real world doesn't wait for you. People die and life changes."

Indeed, while Fusco was on that 15-month shoot, his old dog went deaf, his most cherished horse had to be put down and, most tragically, his younger brother died unexpectedly. "You come home, and it's like, *My wait a minute — what happened?* And I felt a little like the Polo," he said.

Fusco's passion for the explorer's story is so strong that he visited the site even during his occasional days off, he recalled. For him, the show doesn't just tell the explorer's story; it's a way to resurrect Polo's legacy. It's also a deeply personal tale for Fusco. As he put it, "I fell on a story world that speaks to so much of the stuff I love that I could keep doing it and doing it." ☐

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INFO

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Gym Class Zero

Trying the new old-school-inspired Cardio Sport at Burlington's OnTrack

BY SARAH TUFF DUNN

The Queen City's clubs have yet to settle down on a recent weekday that Brian Loeffler is bright-eyed and heady-titled, sitting out a smattering of soccer balls and orange cones in the group fitness room at the OnTrack health and physical therapy center in Main Street Landing. I'm making my first foray into Cardio Sport, which Loeffler describes as "a really high-intensity cardio strength workout."

Michael Dobbs of Burlington has a different way of summing up the class that he's been attending regularly since it kicked off at OnTrack this winter: "It feels like being in PE," he says, "without the adolescent drama."

Goosung may be out, but there's plenty of blood, sweat and tears as instructor Erik Elstrom turns up the Obergang and leads a half-dozen of us through a "bear crawl" on all fours through the compact labyrinth. Just when I'm getting used to the movement, we switch



Cardio Sport class at OnTrack

FITNESS

to running, grapevining and exersaucing jumping jacks with soccer balls in hand.

It's exactly what Loeffler has promised — "a lot of exercises you wouldn't do without someone standing there with a whistle." And that's precisely the point of Cardio Sport, a 55-minute workout born from soccer drills and the mind of an out-of-shape athlete named John Dooley.

Duffy devised Cardio Sport in Massachusetts in 2006, but it didn't become a national franchise until 2011, explains Hilary Hartman, the company's vice president of brand development. OnTrack is the first gym in Vermont to offer the classes, which are a mashup of sports-related compound movements designed to pick up the heart rate in a short setting.

"This style is more complementary to sports and to real, day-to-day life activity than pushing weights back and forth and making individual muscle groups," explains Loeffler. As physical therapist, he says, he was also drawn to the dynamic workout's potential for preventing injury. "You need to be able to move laterally and backwards, and have balance and coordination; it's the first class that made me feel like I was back in high school training for a sport, not just training for the sake of training."

Coordination has never been my strong suit, and I'm certainly feeling so awkward as I find my high school in an attempt to mimic the patterns that Elstrom is expertly leading all over the room. Part of Cardio Sport's premise is scalability; Hartman says that everyone from teenagers to septuagenarians can participate, given that regular prices are not only permitted but encouraged.

"Look up, listen and listen to your body," Elstrom reminds us. "Your heart rate will go up — be careful of that."

In Cardio Sport, when fit athletes can opt to follow the instructor's every doozy while all-the-couch potatoes can pause for a breath and a sip of water whenever they deem it wise.

"The bright yellow like this class," Elstrom tells me after our session. "When it my peers here I told people that they were stop out and take 10 to 30 breaks because of the high pace. But everyone takes it on their own level, not in competition with yourself, not the dude next to you."

IT'S THE FIRST CLASS THAT MADE ME FEEL LIKE I WAS BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL TRAINING FOR A SPORT, NOT JUST TRAINING FOR THE SAKE OF TRAINING.

BRIAN LOEFFLER

The "duke" next to me happens to be Jessica Smith of Hestington, a 19-year-old whose bright-pink T-shirt has me saying to it as I frantically try to keep up: "I know I'm working," she says later of Cardio Sport's fitness. "I know I'm happy, I'm happy to see — and I think the class has gotten a little better."

Below classroom Chantal Bonneau, 31, also says that her endurance has grown "dramatically" since she started Cardio Sport, and that "each class gets easier and easier."

But after trying to weave a soccer ball rapidly in and out of my legs, I had myself on the floor pumping my legs in a move known as "mountain climber." Next I'm performing push-ups — on the damn soccer ball — and then building a squat position for, oh, eternity while holding, you guessed it, that damn soccer ball. The program we're following today is called Gridiron, one of a variety of Cardio Sport options.

The headiest part for me is trying to do "Toe taps" on the soccer ball while lunging up and down like a backboard into strategically placed cones. "These are lots of times

when cones are flying everywhere, as a ball goes out of control," Loeffler admits. "But that's all part of the class."

By the time we're doing "outside shuffles" — spinning back and forth and high-fiving each other for the entire three minutes of Green Day's "Basket Case" — my fear has turned into fun. I'm forgetting about my innate inability to follow dance footwear and am actually happy to pick up the soccer ball for bounding squats and "hot hot" shuffling runs to "Africa" by Toto.

The workout is always getting easier, and it's equally easy to imagine how much more fun Cardio Sport would be outdoors, which Loeffler promises will happen come summertime. Right now, OnTrack offers Cardio Sport six times per week, with a \$10 drop-in fee for nonmembers of the fitness facility.

"You don't need to prepare for this class," Loeffler says in the Cardio Sport carous. "Just bring a water bottle, running shoes or court shoes, and get ready to have some fun and really see a transformation in your fitness."

And maybe, over a transformation in your cheeks about PE class. Elstrom reports that one class member describes the workout's awkward hair curls using a more colorful metaphor from the education world — albeit after a few cocktails. "It reminds me of being on Church Street in college." ☺

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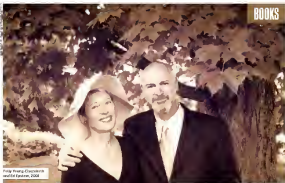
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Unforgettable

What one Vermonter found when her husband lost his memory

BY KEVIN O'CONNOR



Kelly Young-Epstein and her husband, David, 2008

Vermont psychologist Kelly Young-Epstein remembers all the questions she asked at her husband's death. Why had he cashed up some \$700,000 in unexplained credit card bills, written another \$9,000 in checks to himself from their joint accounts and, most disturbingly, suddenly defied her requests to call for an autopsy?

The bottom had dropped out of everything that presented security in his life: she recalls thinking, "I no longer can count on marriage, finances and any strings of control over my circumstances."

Then Young-Epstein learned that her husband, Ed Epstein, had early-onset Alzheimer's disease.

For some, the brain ailment is simply a plot point in dementia cases as still alive; the current film in which Oscar front-runner Julianne Moore portrays a filipsonophic professor losing her memory. But for an estimated 300,000 Americans, depictions of the impairment hit painfully close to home.

"We know something was seriously wrong, but when you're in your flock, you don't want to think of that," Young-Epstein says in an interview. "The day he was diagnosed, I had to revise all

my plans for the future. I said to myself, *Everything has changed. There's no way to fix it. What can I do now?*"

Like many others blindsided by a death, divorce or layoff, the Vermont therapist and writer faced a tidal wave of emotions. She nevertheless found reason to stay with every terrifying yet workable moment.

"As long as I don't deny my feelings," she remembers telling herself, "I can investigate with a gentle awareness what my life is now presenting me."

A longtime proponent of mindfulness, Young-Epstein has trained herself and others to respond to stressful situations with curiosity and matter-of-fact acceptance. The University of Vermont associate professor of psychology elaborates on this practice in her new book, *The Present Heart: A Manual of Love, Loss, and Discovery*. She reveals how "prelaid losses are also an opportunity" and intense relationships can be both "the source of our greatest pain" and "our path to spiritual enlightenment."

Now promoting her work on a national speaking tour, Young-Epstein is offering a personal story that proves truth can be stranger than fiction. Ask the author how

she met the object of her affection, and she reminds to 1999. A 25-year-old Ohio University student at the time, she eyed a fellow young passenger — tall, slender, "his thick black hair rippled down to his shoulders" — on a flight to New York City.

"I noticed you looking at me," he said to her.

She was mailing a marriage proposal from a philosophy professor 15 years her senior, she replied.

"Don't marry that man," he said upon hearing the details. "It's too old for you."

Young-Epstein felt attracted to her instantly, but the marriage blew itself and well — first the professor and then, after divorcing him five years later, a graduate school instructor. Fast-forward to 1991, when she was teaching at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. For six months, she sat across from a balding, middle-aged student named Ed. Then, while drinking one night, the Austin analyst lost his cognition. He was that sober as the piece all these years ago.

The two reconnected. Epstein ended his relationship with another woman and told his teachers, "You are the person I want to spend my life with." Struggling with her

second marriage, Young-Epstein felt extremely conflicted about seeking another divorce. Then she heard Katharine Hepburn speak at the school's commencement. One speech about her three-decade affair with actor Spencer Tracy, the legendary film star declared, "I have tried to live without regret."

Taking those words to heart, Young-Epstein divorced her second husband and married Epstein in 1993.

"The conditions in which Ed and I came to love each other are highly imperfect, even offensive to some," she writes in her book. "Of course, in later years, as the mechanics of our relationship became evident to our friends and family and was witnessed even by strangers, we lived to tell the story of how we met and then love and then found each other."

For the next 25 years, "Ed was the love of my life," she says. "and we had intimacy on all levels," as well as a blended family of children from their previous relationships. Then, in 2004, 53-year-old Epstein began forgetting things such as appointments, paying bills and putting the cap on the gas tank. One day, Young-Epstein relates, she offered to prepare her husband a seasonal sandwich.

"I can make it myself!" she recalls him insisting. He told her, step by step, exactly how he'd do it. But he couldn't follow through. Frustrated, Epstein broke down and cried.

It was another seven years before a neurologist at New Hampshire's Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center diagnosed the problem as "advanced Alzheimer's-type dementia."

"I was simultaneously terrified and relieved," Young-Epstein says of the 2008 diagnosis. "It wasn't a matter of forgetting but the unbearable difficulties he'd caused. It was more a matter of becoming carers."

The doctor wasn't the only one with sobering news. A lawyer, concerned with the couple's abridged finances, advised her to divorce Epstein (no amount he'd receive Medicaid and she wouldn't be liable for his debts), file for personal bankruptcy and sell their suburban home eight miles north of the Vermont capital.

It all grew. Young-Epstein pauses — meaning, in her case, she took the decision out of stopping and asking still that she has practiced for nearly 15 years, since losing Buddha's voice in 1977.

"My meditation practice has taught me both the means and the value of releasing

my immediate experience for what it teaches, and to accept change — even uncomfortable change — as the fundamental ground of my life." Young-Eisendorff says. "What I came to recognize is if you can deeply accept that you can take any kind of tragedy as a teaching!"

Many family members and friends were not that "flexible attitude" was a way to avoid reality. But the researcher was following decades of diaries study as well as her own instructions to clients: People facing adversity need to move forward, step by step, rather than wallowing in past regrets or future worries.

"Recognize you have a precious human life, and it goes by quickly," she says. "The moment-to-moment appreciation of it is your job, boy to yourself. What's arising now? What's possible now? Then make use of the resources that are available."

So Young-Eisendorff scribbled until she could clearly see her answer: End her marriage, work to keep her house and devote herself to finding the right cure for Epstein.

"After uncomfortable change, there is a necessity to tell the next story up to a point," she notes in a handwritten she distributes on her speaking tour. "That point is at the horizon of what we need to recognize in our lives and change ourselves away."

While she's far easier and thus more the therapist, advises people to drop thoughts of perfection and instead, with self-compassion and patience, seek a clear-headed view of reality.

Young-Eisendorff projects a calm and collected demeanor, but the two endorsed a flood of wrenching emotions. She details many of them in emails and diary pages excerpted throughout her book.

"Sometimes I feel tremendous anger and rage, and in about all that is demanded of me," reads an entry from April 24, 2009. "I can hardly allow my feelings to make their way through me, they are so physical. My heart and my throat move in all directions and heart me in incompressible ways."

Three months later, the tension soaked even deeper. "My life has lately seemed very dark, poignant and something else — I don't know, maybe final," she noted. "I've turned over every rock in terms of being 'life with' and I am weary of it."

By 2008, Young-Eisendorff had to move her spouse to a nearby care center when he required more support, then he could provide. But his responsibilities slowly grew when, a year later, she opened her door to find her 36-year-old son delivering his 77-year-old father, the retired professor



**YOUNG-EISENDORFF'S
MEMOIR IS AS MUCH
AN EXPLORATION
OF THE QUESTION
"WHAT IS LOVE?"
AS A RECOLLECTION
OF THE EVENTS THAT
CAUSED HER TO ASK.**

the book names only as Richard, and a surprising revelation. Her first husband, too, had descended into dementia.

"I am overwhelmed with life's care and making a living," she recalls saying. "I can help, but Richard cannot stay here."

Yet Young-Eisendorff knew she was the most equipped to deal with memory loss. Medically and the ruins of related paperwork, she found herself overseeing two ex-husbands — even taking them both out for dinners that she likens to the Mad Tea Party in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.

Young-Eisendorff's memoir is what an exploration of the question "What is love?" as a recollection of the events that caused her to ask that, life just about everything else in her life, her response may surprise people.

"It's hard to answer exactly why my life continued to feel like such a satisfying adventure even though I watch over now [former] husbands," she writes. "Before knowing life, I did not know that such a love was possible, and now, after living

with him for decades, I do not want to live without it."

That's why the devoted wife began a long-distance romance with a colleague she identified simply as "Drew" — 8,000 miles away in South Africa. She met him in a residence after his wife died of cancer.

"I awoke during the night and emotionally smiled over the problem of what has been missing in the last five years," she begins one email included in the book. "Really, it's been the lack of witnessing that has been so hard. But really knows where I am, what I'm doing, what is going on in my physical or mental being."

Young-Eisendorff exchanged 2,000 such messages over two years with Drew before she met the man who is now her partner, a New York City psychiatrist whose name she reveals only as Robert.

"I smile with myself about the pens of sucking a new belief," she confesses in her memoir. "Finally, though, losing life has sharpened my desire for love and life and my sense of the impermanence."

Young-Eisendorff is not alone sharing her feelings at a recent reading at Manchester's Northeast Bookstore. She drew knowing nods from other caregivers of persons with dementia. "Nobody talks about any of this," she told the audience. "There's a loneliness in these moments of tragedy."

Epiphany may question Young-Eisendorff's positive perspective, but by the end of her book, it's clear the fully in an *Epiphany*. Read-bit by reality, she chosen with first conviction to break open rather than apart.

And so she's telling her story to readers from Northfield in New York to Nashville. She still oversees care for her ex-husband Richard. And she still expresses her love for life, though the 60-year-old died on October 15, 2004, just as her memoir began to roll off the press.

"He was so delicate, but he was still able to smile and laugh," Young-Eisendorff says. "He said many times, 'I'm close to my spiritual to nothing'."

And it is here. ☺

INFO

The Present Heart: A Memoir of Love, Loss and Discovery by Polly Young-Eisendorff. Hudson Books 280 pages \$24.95. The author's public appearance schedule — which includes a March 24 program at Norwich University in Northfield — centers around at young's remarkable story.



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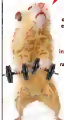
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Not Giving Up the Ghost

Theater review: *Blithe Spirit* at Northern Stage

BY ALEX BROWN



Left to right: Jessie Buckley,
Sam Grady, Alexia Galt

Neil Gaiman wrote *Blithe Spirit* in six days while on holiday, calling it an "impossible feat." It is that, but its underlying elegance requires the characters to stay poised as the forced elements attempt to demolish them. Armed only with good posture and ready wit, they must withstand the haunting of a house and the potential collapse of what Gaiman considers the finest art of structures, a marriage.

Jocelyne and popular novel list Charles Goodwin invite the docty clairvoyant Madame Arcati to conduct a séance at his house, in hopes of picking up ideas for his next book. She unwittingly conjures up the ghost of Charles' first wife, Elvira, whom only Charles can see. And Elvira can't budge as she takes up residence, wishing the décor hadn't changed and that she could still enjoy all the pleasures of life.

When the temperamental Elvira tries to disrupt Charles' marriage to Ruth, his second wife, the husband and his women past and present find new ways to woe

and wound each other. Many scenes take advantage of Ruth's inability to see or hear Elvira, with Charles taking liberties as translator and shifting his alliances freely as what amounts to a spectral love triangle.

In Northern Stage's production, a lean tempo and the assured precision of doffed accents get the concert off the ground easily and once afloat, this comedy simply glides. Gaiman's wit endures, nearly 75 years after the play's premiere in London during the bombings of World War II. It was a diversion in a grim time then, but remains a daily joy.

Director Lillian King, working with a vide and well-appointed set, moves the actors so gracefully that their poses is always upmost. This allows for a few nice moments when equilibrium is ruptured. Charles briefly darts into hiding behind the dress as first seeing the ghost of Elvira, and Ruth makes a cigarette when she's left alone to worry about hosting her ethereal rival. But the scene is stylish, comports movement, always pretty as a picture.

King and the actors construct smart but undashing characterizations of each role. Madame Arcati (an effective Amelia Wilson) is over the eager, curious spiritismist, no matter what the setback, she remains happy and hopeful. She moves a bit like a large, friendly dog, and even raises the room stifling for the telltale scent of ectoplasm. Without showboating, White displays Arcati's eccentricities like a genial grandmother handing round graded snapshots.

As Charles, Sam Grady is the picture of class and composure. He seems just to serene with one wife, two or none. Grady brings the like step of Fred Astaire to his portraiture, and his lately full-body record on each moral of bad news is beautiful, especially paired with the prompt, adorable recovery that pulls him upright again. With twinkling eyes beneath brows arched in mild perplexity, Grady knows just how to convey comic urgency while retaining all his character's breeding.



Left to right: Alfred Hitchcock, Sam Gregory, Jessica Wolfe, Miss Gackson

Alfred Hitchcock gives Ruth a renowned comic presence that underlines the laughs sharply, sometimes at the expense of making her slightly brittle. Ruth seems always "on," bright to the point of hardness. It's a solid approach that wins every joke, but it doesn't allow Ruth to experience the subtle changes in the story, as her intense conflict or align with Charles. (Hitch shows Ruth grieving, stifled, letting her stare with wide-eyed anxiety, but ultimately she takes Ruth's role as straight man so seriously that the character becomes a bit stony.)

The decision to make Ethel (Joan Patney) something of a posturing brat is potentially a clever way to underwrite the youth of Charles' first wife, now dead 10 years and fixed in her late twenties, while Ruth and Charles have reached middle age. Making her young is one thing, but letting her become intolerably snobby is another. The comely, overly compensates, but in time and Charles wouldn't dream of this sheen, gorgeous or not. Patney has an impressive ease on stage, and it's fun to watch her make an unseen ghost talk over a man, but her bow-legged, stilted petulance grows stale.

Rachel Brewster's physical comedy as the mad, earned plenty of laughs from Pealey's giddy audience. The late King devised for this poorly trained servant don't always make sufficient sense, but difficult handling certain objects in too stylized to be human. But Brewster's engaging energy is charming.

As science geists and neighbors the Bradmans, Ray Morton and Mike Bradman do credit to their smaller roles. Morton has a fine, buoyant excitement about the science, and Bradman gives Bradman as a child, without fail.

The stunning set, designed by Jordan Janets, welcomes the audience to a

world of genteel elegance. The intricate maquette floor dazzles while the richly patterned walls are crisscrossed with details like cornices, scones and recessed bookshelves. The layout and furnishings support the action beautifully and provide just the right stuffy perfection to let the comedy of manners bloom.

Composed by Collette C. Renold established the 1941 period, emphasizing a lot of the wartime stress over elegance. Ruth sports trousers, perhaps to suggest the female role and Charles is having about when wearing the pants. Madeline Jacobs' costume is a bright jumble of patterns with just enough reserve to keep her from being ridiculous. The left-down in the back of dinner jackets While Charles clings to normalcy by preening, "I always dress for dinner," he real Bradman never get to in the production.

Elle Spirit filed London's wartime mood by mocking death but its real subjects are marriage and jealousy. Coward punches each character's compass and intertwines three-part conversations that become satirical collages as Ethel rots. Charles steps back and Ruth assumes his comments are directed at her, letting loose a character someone else on stage can't see allows Coward to take a significant misunderstanding that rises higher and higher. The laughs keep coming, and this polished production keeps Comedy vit shining bright. ☺

Contact: alen@newvalleyent.com

INFO

Music: Spiced by Neil Caward. Directed by L. Blum King. Produced by Northern Stage. Through March 1, Runways through Sun. 10:30 p.m. Sunday, 2 p.m. Tuesday, 2 and 7:30 p.m. All Kings Open House in White River Junction. \$15-\$55. Info: 260-9900. northstage.org

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Salad on Waldorf Astoria's plates



Kuba Stiles and Kiva Laoko



The Back Room

Haute Roadside Cuisine

In the back room of a general store, a destination restaurant is born BY ALICE LEVITT

In a 2011, chef Kevin Laoko made international news when he prepared a deceptively simple dish of veal loin in tulum and date syrup. Topped with pine nuts and parmesan seeds, his creation had an air of luxury enhanced by the dishes on which it was served: gold-plated china looted from Saddam Hussein's palace.

Laoko whipped up that dish at Park Avenue, the New York City restaurant where he switched not only menus but also concepts and the decor each season. His shifting moods, to pizzability and love of heritage table settings, may seem tailor-made for the city's dining scene. Yet nearly a year ago, Laoko and partner Kuba Stiles pulled up stakes and relocated to Pittsfield, Vt., where they now own the Original General Store.

Early this month, Laoko pulled out another set of historical plates—from the original Waldorf Astoria—to christen the couple's new weekend-only restaurant, the Backroom. With seating for no more than 30, it

occupies a space that began as the general store's office. When Laoko and Stiles moved in, they turned that back room into the commissary kitchen for Vermont Farm Catering, their Vermont Fresh Network member con-

THE CREAM WAS STUDDED WITH TINY TOBICO THAT POPPED WITH WASABI LIKE SPICY, FISHY FIREWORKS.

pany (Laoko is the executive chef, Stiles the event director) that the space will felt understood. "We thought about it and realized that we're only using it for catering for half the year," Laoko recalled. "We thought that the rest of the year, we might as well make something cool out of it."

The first step was to apply their unerring eyes to decorating the small space. The dining room has wooden floors as floors they appear at first to be walls, creating a secretive, apocalyptic atmosphere. A fan of bare light bulbs hangs on long, black wires over each of the two tables, while music plays from an iPod through a tiny gramophone speaker. Even the bathroom has style to spare. Stiles and Laoko wallpapered the rooms themselves with paper from England that depicts kitchen tools such as pepper mills, scales and toasters.

It's a stark contrast to the traditional interior of the general store, with its dark wood and barrels of penny candy. Laoko and Stiles still sell old food, DVDs of "Home Improvement" and other staples to locals who rely on the store as a community hub, but they've put their stamp on that business, too.

Since taking over ownership last March, the couple has transformed the store's portable stock. Instead

HAUTE ROADSIDE CUISINE: JEFFREY

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SIDEdishes

BY HANNAH PALMER BOON & ALICE LENTZ



Dilemma Solved

DOUGH-NUT SHOP COMING TO BURLINGTON

SINCE MICHELLE CUNNINGHAM started her home bakery DOUGHNUT CILINDRA last January, she's been hoping to open a bricks-and-mortar store. "It is obviously a lot scarier to go all out [at first]," she says. "The home bakery made it a whole lot easier to gain some experience and let people know we're there."

Now, having developed a cult following at the BURLINGTON FARMERS MARKET and through direct ordering, the South Burlington baker is taking the next step. If all goes as planned, Doughnut Dilemma will open in the former Big Boy's BBQ space at 55 Main Street in Burlington at the end of March.

What can customers expect? "The small of smattering doughnuts when they walk in," Cunningham declares. Coffee and espresso from CUNNINGHAM LOGGERS, hot chocolate, and tea will add to the menu. Limited seating will allow guests to stay in for those hot drinks while they indulge.

But the main event is the sweet stuff. With her inspiration from the store, Cunningham will make the transition from farm-to-table to farm-to-table that costs 36 cents a dozen. Her days of making a maximum of 700 doughnuts in a weekend — and knowing she could have sold more — will soon be over. "And my house won't smell like doughnuts anymore," she says.

Doughnut Dilemma has gained a reputation for mass-season flavors, including Hot Krispies treat and a'more. Treated coconut and maple-glazed are among the most popular varieties, Cunningham says.

When the store opens, Cunningham will debut new options — a pineapple upside-down cake doughnut is in the works. She may also heed requests from the farmers market patrons who've expressed their yen to taste banana in her maple doughnuts.

The menu will change weekly, with special additions for holidays. At last Saturday's Valentine's Day farmers market, for instance, Cunningham incorporated fresh raspberries into cake

and yeast doughnuts. For St. Patrick's Day, she plans to make a Guinness doughnut, as well as one drenched with Bailey's Irish Cream. With the lack of the Irish, her Burlington store will open soon after.

—AL

Ciderhouse Rules

NEWPORT CIDERHOUSE BOB & GILL REPLACES BROWN OGG RESTRO In January, NEWPORT CIDERHOUSE BOB & GILL replaced BROWN OGG RESTRO at the in-house restaurant at Newport's NORTHWEST KINGDOM SKATING CENTER. BOB AND GILL CO-OWNER ELEANOR LEEGER took



COURTESY OF CIDERHOUSE

the reins after the Brown Dog closed in late December due to faulty illness. [Read more about Leiger and her company in this week's feature "Sweeter Spig," page 46.]

The restaurant is the centerpiece of the Tasting Center, which Leiger conceived two years ago, with ample local support, to showcase the best of Vermont's native food products. Her culinary is based on the basement floor.

The Ciderhouse is less formal than the original brew — black paper napkins have replaced white linen — and the space reflects a

lighthearted approach, with a more pub-like vibe. The change also brought back original Brown Dog chef and owner, whose recent features house smoked meats such as barbecue-glazed baby back ribs, all sourced locally.

Much of what's on the menu is available for sale in the adjacent shop. "We're really trying to leverage everything we have in the Tasting Center," Leiger says.

Other bites include SPINACH HILLMAN burger burgers — topped with local bacon, blue cheese from the creamery AT JAMPER HILL and pizzicotti or apple chutney, bacon and cheddar. Sandwiches come stacked with pulled pork or house-smoked beef on buns.

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food

Haute Roadside Cuisine



Let us get a little more over cocktails and appetizers

now come from Red Hen Baking Co., and most meats in the butcher shop are local. At breakfast, passivity can still pick up a bacon-egg-and-cheese sandwich or pancakes at the counter, but their options now include maple French toast with caramelized bananas and bacon sausage, served with whole-grain avocado toast. Later in the day, the kitchen serves local beef burgers, alongside hot sandwiches featuring Vermont Salami sausage or slow-roasted pulled pork with plant-fenelers.

So how did Laska, a New York Times-starring chef and strikes the public relations and marketing director for the Fourth Wall Restaurant group, wind up running a general store 20 minutes from Killbuck? Vermonters can thank the Spoutinacci.

The couple made regular stops in Vermont as they traveled throughout the Northeast competing in the grueling obstacle races. Then, Laska, a New England Culinary Institute grad, enjoyed crawling under barbed wire and leaping over flames with his lady love. And the pair got to know Spoutinacci Race cofounder and CEO Joe De Sena in the mountains—literally De Sena lives in Pittsfield, where his main employer is the co-owned Anna's Farm—a farmhouse that he and his family now runs as a 15-acre—and nearly event location Riverside Farm.

Back then, De Sena also owned the Original General Store—and was eager to sell it to the New York couple. "He was fed up with the store" and Laska "he was a huge pain for him. We didn't know how much work the general store would be. It turned out

The Original General Store



to be a lot more work than we were prepared for."

The endeavor might not have been all-consuming for another couple, but Spoutinacci and Laska clearly don't have the word "half-assed" in their vocabularies. While retaining everything charming about the storefront store, they revamped it to showcase local brands. The certified organic farm just across the street, Sweet Georgia Peas at Anna's Farm, provides produce—and every egg in the breakfast sandwiches.

Stiles and Laska live above the store's historic building and are rarely anywhere else. "We're basically here from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. or 9 p.m. every day," Stiles admitted.

Last summer their already-packed schedule included catering more than 20 weddings, most of them at Anna's

er Riverside Farm. So why did Stiles and Laska give their business a third prong – the restaurant – after less than a year? Stiles explained their reasoning: “Kevin’s a trained chef, why not let him cook a little bit of what he’s trained to do?”

The new venture seems destined to be busy, too. On the Backroom’s first Saturday of dinner service, the small space sold out. Stier and general store employee Jill McGrath greeted guests with glasses of sparkling wine. Laska held court in his small kitchen – really just a date counter facing stoves and a pantry stocked with delicacies such as quince vinegar and Italian fish sauce.

Over Thistle Hill Farm Farmstead Tartanese Fondue, diners pursued the drink menu. Stiles and McGrath passed the apples from a well-stocked bar hidden in what looked like a coat check area.

Laska and he’d insisted that his favorite drink – a Negroni – be included on the menu. The recipe includes Stiles’ favorite ingredient: Tom Cat gin and a blood-orange twist. The other cocktails were concocted by Stiles, who had restaurant jobs in college before his career in culinary marketing. One of her drinks, A Fine Mix, combined maceral and Sugar Bole’s Smoked Maple Syrup. The drink’s sweet headrush promised to leave diners on falling just as its name assured.

The Backroom served five course dinners in its first week, but Stiles said the couple would experiment with three for the next few weekly menus. “We’d like to evolve and do five or six courses with a different price point, then ramp it up from there,” she said.

After the fondue and drinks, diners took a DLT salad featuring hydroponically grown lettuce and sometimes with Sugar Hill Farm’s Begley Hazelnut Olive and homemade Dijon-cranberry coulis.

Though the salad was topped with a flavorful Green Goddess dressing and served on the Waldorf Astoria plates, it didn’t prepare diners for the boldness of the next dish: Laska had deconstructed his favorite bagel sandwich from New York’s Russ & Daughters in the form of dippy chicken pasta. Cold curls of salmon gave the warm, creamy pasta a slight pop of smoke. Dill-packed crème fraîche took obvious inspiration from cream cheese on a bagel, but the cream was studded with tiny tubers that popped with wasabi like spicy, tiny turnips. It was a welcome shock that made the room vibrate with excitement.

One of the couple’s stated goals in opening the Backroom was to “inspire friends.” At the intimate tables, it was impossible not to Meghan Sheradin executive director of the Vermont Fresh Network, said she engaged in several unexpected conversations that night with her tablemates, who included De Sena.

“Sitting in a community-type meal can sometimes be scary for people, but once the conversation takes off, it just goes all over the place and you have an experience that’s so much more than dinner. The question is, are you up for it?” Sheradin said.

Laska himself appeared concerned with “the risk event,” a potential short-run risker Nifty Gravy Gravy Company of Vermont points. The entire crew with a side of late October for the table. “Can anyone guess what the secret ingredient is?” Laska asked. At the end of the course, he returned to see if anyone could name what made the braised green squash. No one figured out that its round, smoky taste came from anchovy paste.

By the time dinner rolled around, diners had indeed felt like old friends both with one another and with the Backroom’s owners. There didn’t seem to be as much dark chocolate tension as there was. But, dotted with intensely sausage-flavored macarons, it was an inevitable tale on an orange Milano cookie that everyone devoured.

Then, once the bowls were cleared, guests seemed less than eager to leave. Mary had a long way to go, having come from Montpelier or Burlington. Sheradin stressed that the Backroom will serve out its niche among just such demanding diners. “It’s an amazing thing that this chef now lives in Vermont and has a restaurant that is definitely a destination,” she said. “For a lot of people, you’re definitely going to have to drive out of your way to get there.”

Destination or not, the Backroom is sure to retain special appeal for those who discover the treasure hidden in the back of a classic Vermont general store. Some may even like its friendly atmosphere enough to stay in town for a breakfast sandwich the next day. They just shouldn’t expect to see it on stoned cheese.

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Apples for Dessert

Vermont's cider boom includes a sweet treat: ice cider

BY HANNAH PALMER EGAN

Among Vermont's new wave of ciders, many are trending toward drier dryness, dialing the sweetness down to nearly zero. But one subset of the local cider revolution is embracing the apple's natural sugar.

Ice cider, made with juice concentrated through an elaborate process of freezing and refreezing, is created, packaged, pressed and sold as a dessert wine. Unlike hard cider which enjoys a long and rich tradition, this apple drink is a more recent phenomenon. The first ice ciders emerged from Quebec in the early 1800s, pressed from apples that were left to hang and freeze on the trees and harvested in winter.

This side of the border, ice cider makers do things a little differently. Apples are picked in autumn and pressed right away, but instead of fermenting the liquid then and there, cider makers store it in cube-shaped plastic tanks, leaving these outside to freeze during the winter. Later, they melt the juice under controlled conditions. Sugar falls out of solution first, creating the concentrated super-juice (about 20 percent of the original liquid) that cider makers use as their base. Because of the high initial sugar levels, they stop fermentation before the yeast can up all of it. When alcohol and sugar reach just the right balance, the result is a sweet, apple-forward drink.

"For us, it's about the flavor of the apples," Eden Ice Cider co-owner Eleanor Lager told *Seven Days* in Burlington last week. "We've excited about apples, and we want to showcase that flavor."

Lager was in town, along with folks from Sheehans' Shadokery Cider and Whitebriar's Vermont Ciderery, among others, to celebrate winning a 2015 Good Food Award. That nationwide competition recognizes products with exceptional flavor and producers who embrace socially and environmentally responsible practices.

Founded in 2007, Eden is Vermont's biggest, but-known ice cider producer. With a winery at Newport's Northeast Kingdom Touring Center and an orchard in West Charleston, Eden makes ciders that are available in 36 states around the

country. They've earned space on wine lists at Michelin-starred restaurants such as New York's Greengrory Tavern and Del Posto.

As the product gains recognition, more Vermont orchardists are turning to ice cider for an additional income stream. "We have more ice cider producers in Vermont than any other state," Lager said. "And you don't have to say 'per capita' about it. So it's odd to be our thing."

With fewer than a dozen producers, ice cider represents a small fraction of

the state's cider output. But for farmers and small-business owners, a big draw is the fact that ice cider can be made in much smaller batches and sold at a decent profit margin. Unlike hard cider which is consumed like beer and must be sold at a similar price point, ice cider flies the dessert wine crowd, who are accustomed to dropping \$20 to \$30 on a 350-milliliter bottle.

Lager and her husband (and Whitebriar founder and winemaker), Albert Lager, first encountered ice cider in 2006, on a trip to Montreal to visit his family. That

first taste was a Goldilocks moment: Ice cider seemed to fill a hole in the puzzle that the couple was piecing together.

At the time, the Lagers were in the process of buying a 150-acre abandoned farm near Lake Willoughby. They hoped to use the land for something productive. "We loved apples and [were] thinking, 'OK, we'll plant some more, that'll



ILLUSTRATION BY HANNAH PALMER EGAN



More food after the classifieds section PAGE 47

SUNDAY BRUNCH

be fun. But what can we do with trees?" Eleanor Leger recalled.

A former software consultant, she had been raising numbers on hard cider and apple brandy. Cider presented an immediate economy of scale, and the years of lag time between fermentation and sale ruled out brandy. Leger had never heard of ice cider, but when she tasted it, she knew: "This is that small-scale, niche, high-priced product," she remembered thinking.

And Vermont is an ideal place to make the stuff. "This is something that is unique to this region," she said. "We have an incredible history of apple growing here. And lots of cold weather. You could believe that the best ice cider in the world could come from here!"

As Leger laid out her logic, it was easy to see why she'd also ice cider's most effective champion. In 2000, the Legers began working with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture to educate enologists and others on the ice cider process. In 2004, she worked to found the Vermont Ice Cider Association, which is now becoming the Vermont Cider Association.

One of ice cider's early adopters was Hall Home Place, in Isle La Motte. Co-owner Carol Stata grew up in the Champlain Islands on land her family has worked since the 1700s. "We built the orchard we planted in the 1980s," she said via phone last week. Stata's brother, Allen Hall, continued operating the farm after their parents stopped, but times were tough. "We wanted to keep the orchard in the family," Stata said. "We were trying to find a way to help make it pay for itself!"

The Halls opened a seasonal cafe on the property in 2008. And when they learned about Vermont's earliest ice-cider industry later that year, Stata contacted the Legers. "This became our mission," she said. Hall Home Place debated its first ice cider in 2009.

Like many other ice-cider makers, Hall Home Place has since introduced a hard cider and apple wine, made with the extra liquid not used in ice-cider production. "As we started doing this, we were like, 'We have all this leftover juice, and we didn't want to waste it,'" Stata said.

Diversification also drew Bayden Valley Winery & Spirits — which makes ice wine and cider under the Vermont Ice label — into the game, according to owner David Bayden and wine room manager Bridget Jones. Ice wine is labor-intensive and unpredictable, however, and the Baydens have been fermenting apple-must-see wine and other apple beverages with fruit from Brown's Orchard & Farmstead, in Castleton, since 1996. When Vermont Ice added cider to its line in 2007, it was a natural fit. "We had so much history with apples, and knowing what we want to get out of them," Jones said. "Our ice cider is a nice blend of apples,

which gives you this fall apple flavor. It's like taking a bite of a very fresh, very sweet apple."

How do these drinks stand up against each other, and against traditional ciders? For a comparative tasting of seven Vermont ice ciders, Seven Days sat down with Decidua Wine's Jason Zahradt, Abby Kells and Scott Dobson. (Dobson is also the beverage director at Bluebird Tavern, where Zahradt is a partner.)

The session revealed a couple things. First, that these ciders are in a different class than grape-based dessert drinks — strong, sweet apple forms a solid baseline. For all of them, with deviations running the gamut from spry to syrupy. Second, that taste in ice wine is, as with all wine, subjective. On one tongue, a sip might reveal notes of cord-rouge, or another, mushrooms. Head on for our tasting notes.



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historic Alstead Farm in South Hero

acorn Caramel and butterscotch on
the nose, dense sugar and caramel-drift
syrupy. Acid and sugar-out of balance.

acorn Smoke, caramel, vinyl on the
nose. Full body, baked apple, honey
syrupy, moderate finish.

acorn Nose of baked apple, honeyuckle,
peach brittle. Fairly viscous and heavy,
thick and cloying, with a honeyed finish.

HANNAH Tasty caramel super-sweet,
syrupy scent. Mouthcoo cherry
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Eden Ice Cider, West Charleston

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Blanc d'Heret, Krippen Spitzburg and
Ashmead's Seedling apples from Scott
Farm Orchard in Danversville, aged one
year to stainless steel

acorn Fresh apple and meloniness on the
nose, slight mandarin flavor with decent
acidity.

acorn Flecked and marmalade nose with
McIntosh (apple), wood, earth, apple
peel, apricot. Medium body, medium
acid, nice balance and length. A bit of
honey, wheat bread and caramel pear.

acorn Heirloom, grassy apples, fresh nose.
Maple, melon/pale. Good weight, but
with acid for freshness. Tanginess.

HANNAH Fresh green apple nose, nice
tart acidity. Broadly buxty, woody, with
apricot undercurrent and floral notes.

NEWMALL FARM ICE CIDER

Newhall Farm, Newbury

Golden straw color, pressed from 100
percent organic, estate-grown Liberty
Empire, Gravenstein, Honeycrisp, Cortland,
mix of heirloom and wild apple

acorn Brown sugar on the palate, too
sweet with low acidity.

acorn Meloness, oats and baked apple
nose, green apple and Jolly Rancher.

acorn Cinnamon (candy like Red Hots),
bake apple cream and Sarsaparilla candy
or gum.

acorn Cinnamon-baked brown sugar nose,
palate like Drake's coffee cake.

SOUTH END BLEND

Hill House Place, Isle La Motte

Pale straw color, estate-grown diversity
blend apple blend, aged three to four
months in steel

acorn Malted spice on the nose.
Balanced sugar/acidity.

acorn Heavy apple and fruit-leather
nose; clove, red apple, sesame. Finish
drops off quickly.

acorn Apple cake nose, sweet and tart;
simple.

acorn Lighter body, mellow acid
and green apple. One note, but quite
agreeable.

HONEYCRISP ICE CIDER

Champion Orchard, Shoreham

Pale golden in color, pressed from estate-
grown Honeycrisp apples.

acorn Vinyl apple and spice nose. Pie
filling on the palate.

acorn Simple nose of green olive green
apple, heavy candied on palate with
fick, earth and lemon.

acorn Earthy nose. Rainy-day apple
aroma, savory edge.

acorn Woodsy, undercurrent y nose.
Tart apple, lemon/citrus in mouth.

NORTHERN SPY BARREL-AGED

Eden Ice Cider

Amber colored single variety cider aged
in stainless steel then in French oak
barrels.

acorn Baked apple and oak on the nose.
Tart apple and mulling spice on the
palate.

acorn Heavy bourbon nose, notes of
vinyl and rubbing alcohol. Mellow
mouth, citrus. Red apple, cilantro,
menthol. Nice. Finest of the bunch.

acorn Maple, apple cake, cinnamon and
smoked vanilla nose. Cider doughnuts,



acidity mid-palate, beamed sugar and caramel, only finish

RENEGADE: Tasty, zesty, woody on the nose. Rich caramel and lots of complex light oak mid-palate

ICE CIDER, VERMONT ICE

**Gayden Valley Winery & Spirits,
Canaan, VT**

Pale straw color, pressed from a blend of Brown Orchard & Farmstead apples, fermented in stainless steel, aged in French oak.

WARM: Pasty vanilla apple on the nose. Caramel apple, oak included on the palate.

WARM: Bushmills Irish Whiskey, apple, cedar and rose rose. Purple green and red apple, vanilla-washed base on the finish

WARM: Woody nose, apple chips. Apple, vanilla extract, wood chips.

HANDMADE: Spraggy with hints of stone fruits

Contact: jwarrick@vermontspirit.com

INFO

fordhamorchards.com, vermontice.com,
newt@vermontice.com, hollandspace.com,
orangeorchards.com, gaydenvalley.com

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www.GardenersSupplyCompany.com

calendar

FEBRUARY 18 & 19, 2015

WED. 18

art

GLASS & ZIP Building Phoenix artists depict a glass of wine, then drink only under the tutelage of instructor Lynn Charnick. Following Art Center Glass, 6:30-9 p.m. \$35-45; for info or to sign up, info 263-9338

business

REALTY MARKETING MEETING Marketing advertising communications professionals and design professionals brainstorm local realty opportunities on location. Room 217, Inland Building, Champlain College, Burlington, 7-8:30 a.m. Info: 515-875-4180

comedy

COMEDY RELAY: A BENEFIT FOR COPS Jacksonville police hosting material on this annual benefit for Burlington's Cambridge Community Shelter. Burlington, 8-10 p.m. \$5-15. Info: 548-5438

community

COMMUNITY DINNER Dining at a local neighborhood to know, e.g. buffet style meal sponsored by the Vermont Council of Churches Community Center. Woodstock, 6-7:30 p.m. Free. An interview 18 would be necessary for info. Transportation available for seniors. Info: 855-4055

KING STREET CENTER GRAND OPENING CELEBRATION

Local artists and the original store's home. King Street Center, Burlington, 4-9 p.m. Free. Info: 864-8566

PEER SUPPORT CIRCLE

A confidential group allows participants to discuss freely without giving names or solving problems. The Wellness Co-op, Burlington, 5-6 p.m. Free. Info: 333-8422

crafts

KNITTING & NEEDLEWORKS Crafts classes for women run. Burlington Memorial Library, Colchester, 6-8 p.m. Free. Info: 264-5686

education

SAVE RAINWATER The founder of the Vermont Day School teaches practical environmental education in this 90-minute lecture. 7-8:30 p.m. \$10. Classes to book: www.sustainableliving.com. Community Library, Winooski, 8-9 p.m. Free. Info: 875-4966

environment

CREATING FERTILITY & OPPORTUNITY

CONSIDERING CLIMATE CHANGE: BENEFIT Scientists describe scientific research and share stories about the impact of climate change

on Vermont, on real economy to benefit the world. See events at www.vermont.com for details. Vermont Technical College, Randolph, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. \$40. Pre-reg. info: 333-6221. www.vt.edu

THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING: PINK CLUB

Movie then a musical band of the musical into dancing between capitalism and creative change. Space in event space. Vermont Technical College, Randolph, 8-10 p.m. Free. Pre-reg. info: 333-6221. www.vt.edu

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE A healthy donor gives half of 16. See www.redcross.org for details. Various locations statewide. Free. Info: 1-800-733-2387

TECH HELP WITH CLIP Help develop skill sets, application to online phones, tablets and more. Community Library, 6-8 p.m. Free. Pre-reg. info: 875-4966

TECH TUTOR PROGRAM Topics: mouse operation, email, navigation and device operation on an online device. Community Library, Winooski, 5-6:30 p.m. Free. Pre-reg. info: 875-4966

VALLEY NIGHT FEATURING THE RAINBOW CHORUS Local choir for this weekly hour of multi-genre music. Rainbows & Rainbows, 8-9 p.m. Free. Info: 864-8566

film

FRIGIDALIVE WINTER FILM SERIES: HERO & DEBILITY An American David their eyes on the great David & Debility documentary about the lives of David and Debility. Vermont Technical College, Randolph, 8-10 p.m. Free. Info: 333-6221

FOOD & DRINK Craft beer from Burlington's local brewery. Community Library, Colchester, 6-8 p.m. Free. Info: 264-5686

food & drink

CACTUS & BEEHIVE WINTER DINNER Craft beer from Burlington's local brewery. Community Library, Colchester, 6-8 p.m. Free. Info: 264-5686

COFFEE TASTING Taste of Vermont Coffee. Community Library, Colchester, 6-8 p.m. Free. Info: 264-5686

COMING OF AGE A film about the lives of David and Debility. Vermont Technical College, Randolph, 8-10 p.m. Free. Info: 333-6221

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Let There Be Light

Every year, Montreal on Lansbury transforms the city's downtown into one of the world's largest winter festivals. With annual attendance topping 900,000, this frozen fair comes alive with 10 days of ice dining, film, theater, comedy, live music and visual art. A wide array of indoor and outdoor venues host more than 300 events, catering to festgoers of all ages and tastes. Spoiling of tastes, culinary creations from top international chefs fuel the festivities and give foodies reason to travel north of the border. This sensory sensory feast off with New Marche, an awe-inspiring night of light installations, exhibitions, concerts and dancing.

MONTREAL EN LUMIERE

Thursday February 19 through Wednesday February 25. Various times, in downtown Montreal. See website for future dates. Tickets vary. Info: 514-268-3005. www.montrealenlumiere.com



Going Downhill Fast

There are slalom, and then there's the Stowe Derby. Now in its 70th year, this legendary race from the top of Mount Mansfield to the village of Stowe is done exclusively on cross-country skis. Athletes must combine Alpine and Nordic disciplines on a harrowing 12.5-mile course that drops more than 2,600 feet in elevation. A true test of mental and physical stamina, the competition attracts hundreds of skiers from around the country, who summon strength, skill and luck to make it through unscathed. New this year, fat-bike riders navigate the snow-covered terrain on two wheels, cheered on by hordes of spectators.

STOWE DERBY

Sunday, February 22, 7:30 a.m., at Stowe Mountain Resort. \$25-100. Free for spectators. Info: 253-7904 ext. 22. stowederby.com



LIST YOUR UPCOMING EVENT HERE FOR FREE

ALL SUBMISSIONS ARE DUE BY 4:00 PM ON THE DAY BEFORE PUBLICATION. PLEASE USE CONVENTION FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS. CONTACT US AT: info@vermontcalendar.com

FOR A FULL LIST OF ALL EVENTS, VISIT www.vermontcalendar.com. FOR A FULL LIST OF ALL EVENTS, VISIT www.vermontcalendar.com. FOR A FULL LIST OF ALL EVENTS, VISIT www.vermontcalendar.com.



CALENDAR EVENTS IN SEVEN DAYS

ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMEN ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT THEIR ARTS AND CRAFTS FOR SALE AND DISPLAY. SUBMISSIONS ON ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY THE DEADLINE FOR THE ARTS AND CRAFTS SECTION. WHEN APPROVED, CLASS DISPLAYS WILL BE ADDED TO THE MAIN PAGE AND CLASS LISTING.

FEB.20 | MUSIC

Homeland Harmonies

Vocalist, composer, multi-instrumentalist, cultural ambassador — Herbert Kibwe is all of these and more. Known onstage as Kibwe, the Ugandan native tears the world, introducing audiences to a unique mix of African, international and roots music. A gifted performer, he incorporates kumu, lukembe and other traditional African instruments into a varied acoustic repertoire. Dedicated to sharing his country's rich musical heritage, Kibwe takes time to explore each instrument's social and historical context. The resulting concert experience is one that sparks curiosity and highlights music's ability to transcend boundaries and facilitate lasting multicultural connections.

KIBWE

Friday, February 20, 8 p.m., at Mahoney Center for the Arts, Mahanoy College. Price: Info: 610-812-1122
mcollege.edu



Photo by Rick Korman, Inc.

FEB.19 | MUSIC

Gregory Porter isn't your typical jazz singer. A former football star whose pursuit of professional sports was cut short by injury, he took a circuitous route to the stage where he found his true calling. There, Porter blossomed into a Grammy Award-winning vocalist the *New York Times* describes as a "booming baritone with a gift for earthy refinement and soaring uplift." Always clad in a suit and his signature hat, Porter has a quirky style that echoes his unconventional approach to jazz. A hybrid of blues, soul and gospel, his sound reflects a childhood spent listening to Nat King Cole rather than conservatory training, but listeners can't tell the difference.

GREGORY PORTER

Thursday, February 19, 7:30 p.m., at Ryan Merritts at Lexington 545-46. Info: 503-9906
ryann.org



ALL JAZZED UP

Photo by Rick Korman, Inc. (left) Photo by Rick Korman, Inc. (right)

MEMBERS FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OF BRIDGE TOWN MEET QUINCE: A Friday 11 a.m. pre-booking service to help you live music and a silent auction. \$60/leader \$60/leader \$8/p.m. \$6/20 pre-booking info: 426-3700

events

CRICKET WORKSHOP: After this is the one of a kind senior fair. Community lunch. King of Mountain Co. on pop. 5:30-7:30 p.m. \$8/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

dance

LET'S GO! DANCE: Green Mountain Cultural Center Arts & Crafts Center. 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

DANCE & DRINKING: The music at the dance is the music of the dance. 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

USA DANCE VIBES KILLERBOOM SOCIAL: Killerboom Social. 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

info

ADAP TAP AND DANCE: Tap dance classes. 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

AMERICAN COUNTRY FLOOR DANCE: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

RISE AND DANCE: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

CENTRAL VERMONT COMMUNITY ADOPTION CENTER: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

ADAP TAP AND DANCE: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

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EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

food & drink

BRUCE WINE & ART SHOWCASE: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

CAPITAL CITY WINTER FARMERS MARKET: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

CHOCOLATE TASTING: 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$10/20 pre-booking info: 227-2222 ext. 262

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EMAIL: effort@uvm.edu



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SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE

calendar

TUESDAY 10/12

classroom

EXOTIC DANCE: A few dance movement experts are invited to give a lesson for beginner, intermediate and advanced. **Swing Dance** Burlington 1:15-4:45 pm \$9.50 suggested donation info: 540-858-0

INTERNATIONAL BALLET DANCE: Movement and presents two ballets on the stage. **University of Vermont** 8:30 pm Free info: 533-0338

INTRO TO TRUMPET, MELLOPHONE: Advanced students define their playing technique and technique. **South Vermont State** Burlington 8:45 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

DANCE DANCE PRACTICE SESSION: Tabernash dance group, familiar with the local dance community and the dance. **South Vermont State** Burlington 8:45 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

TANTRIC PRACTICE SESSION: Students looking to master the tantric tradition focus on their first and second level. **South Vermont State** Burlington 7:15 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

environment

SOLAR POWER & HEATING WORKSHOP: A SunConcave representative will discuss ways to reduce the use of energy and avoid fossil fuel dependence. **University of Vermont** Burlington 6:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

etc.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE: See WED 11

film

NOON BERNIE: A comedy about a man who gets a new job in a small town. **University of Vermont** Burlington 12:15 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

food & drink

FEST FOODS AND DRINK FOR 100: See THU 23

gameplay

GAMING FOR TENS & ANALYSIS: Taking games and using them to play. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

health & fitness

GENEALOGY FOR 100: A special theme for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

INTRO TO YOGA: A new class for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

JAZZBOLE LITE: See THU 10 & 11

FOR THE PLANTS: A new class for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

PERSONAL YOGA & PRACTICE: See WED 10, 11 & 12

arts

BURY IT TOGETHER WITH TIME: A new class for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

CHAMPIONSHIP FOR 100: A new class for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

FRESHMAN STORY & CHAMPIONSHIP: A new class for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

MUSIC WITH MR. CHUB: A new class for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

PRODUCTION MUSIC: A new class for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

STORY EXPLORES IN CAMP: See SAT 21

STORY STORY TIME/PLAY: A new class for the 100th anniversary of the University of Vermont. **University of Vermont** Burlington 8:30 pm \$10 info: peter.mccall@uvm.edu

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AT THE FLYNN
FLYNNSPACE

KRISTINA WONG
"The Wong Street Journal"

Wed. & Thurs., February 20 & 26 at 7:30 pm

IBM
The Artist in Action
Foundation

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VT Artist Space Grant recipients

Sat., February 28 at 8 pm &
Sun., March 1 at 2 pm

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Vermont Farmer

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NEW THIS WEEK



February 18, 2015
Meet the Ballfield Benders
Vermont Overcoming Topsoil
a spirited group of high
schoolers who raised
vital funds at the recent
national fundraising
competition in Dallas, TX.

sponsored by



art

students' ambulatory efforts to fill basic undergraduate learning gaps are rewarded with the three primary colors, states are. They will be a lot of supplies available for purchase from about \$100 (books or else). Mar 5-30
Cost: \$100/semester (plus \$10/semester) Location: Ohio
Liaison: Learning Institute
E/2-C Thompson, Jr. Burlington, Ind. 42601-2522. arnold@um.edu <http://www.um.edu/index.htm>
Web: <http://www.um.edu/~arnold/>
Other: extensive, online

[illegible]

BCA

CLASS GRADING PROPOSAL:
 Classify as lower grade than

[illegible][illegible]

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Thurstin' for More

Jamie Lee Thurstin on modern country, his rocker dad and not-quite-stardom

BY DAN RULLES

When a young Jamie Lee Thurstin left his Vermont home for Los Angeles, and later Nashville, in 1994, local fans behind the singer saw bound-for-country-music glory. But a funny thing happened on the way to the Grand Ole Opry: He didn't get there.

That's not to say that Thurstin, a Waterbury native and son of why-rocker Jimmy T. Thurstin, has been a failure. Far from it. He's written songs for country stars such as Tim Allen, Montgomery Gentry and Rodney Atkins — ironically, the last charted on a Thurstin tune titled “15 Minutes.” He's fitted with major labels, including Warner Bros., with whom he briefly had a record deal in 2006. He has eight full-length albums to his credit and another due out this year, which he believes will be his finest to date.

Armed with a six-string guitar and a distinctive, gravelly growl, Thurstin has carved out a modest career in mainstream country. But the stardom many had assumed for him — and which, by his own admission, he still craves — has proved elusive. At least for now.

For more than 15 years, Thurstin has clawed his way through an unforgiving music industry at a time when its future has been uncertain. “Leave it to me to go into the music business right when it's going to the tank,” he says. Still, despite the ups and downs, Thurstin remains resolute in his dream.

Then Friday, February 20, Thurstin will play a homecoming gig at the Barry M. Gold in Skaneateles by

his dad. In honor of that show, we spoke to the country singer from his home in Nashville.

SEVEN DAYS: How are you, Jamie Lee? How's Nashville?

JAMIE LEE THURSTIN: Cold, man. I mean, it's pretty cold, probably in the teens or something. But it's cold.

SD: Dude, it's in the negative teens here right now.

JLT: Jesus. I can't deal with the negative numbers anymore. I'll take puffy cold.

SD: I don't blame you. So, one of the turning points of your career was that you had a deal with Warner Bros., but it fell through. It seemed like it was in the bag, so what happened?

JLT: Well, it was a paper bag and the bag was wet. What happened was that I had a song that had come in as a “Hot Shot” on *Billboard*, which is a big deal. So they offered me a deal. But right at the same time, *Asylum* [the record, a WB subsidiary label] closed and they had to absorb all of these artists. So no more deal for me. But the head of A&R told me, “Trust me. You don't want to be here right now.” So we probably right.

SD: That must have been cold comfort, though.

JLT: Yeah. It's a much longer story. But that's the gist. I

don't know how else to describe it except to say that I was fucking crushed.

SD: But then Rodney Atkins did one of your songs, “15 Minutes.”

JLT: Yep. That one made it, like, No. 16, which was his fastest-moving single to date. And he had put some coffee for straight No. 15 or some thing. But it got to be and his management decided it wasn't a good song for his image so they basically dropped it, and then it fell like a brick.

SD: Still, charting that high is pretty cool. But was it bitter-sweet to have someone else chart with one of your songs?

JLT: I've never really thought about it. It was a no-brainer to do and it is what it is. I just see around and around.

SD: You've certainly been through the ringer in your darker moments, have you been tempted to just walk away?

JLT: To cut to the chase, I don't know what else I would do. You definitely get tired of it, but it's all I've ever done. What's my fallback plan? I don't have one. But there have been times when I would think, *I'm just gonna tell them all to go fuck themselves, move to Florida and play in a ball bar for the rest of my life.* But it's just something I have to

soundbites

BY DAN BELLES



Go (South) West, Young Man! (And Women!)

For mid-February, it's a remarkably busy week on the local music front. And we'll get to all that in a moment. (Though I'm honestly tempted to just write "promote someone" over and over again until I hit any 1,200-word column limit.) But we begin this week's column with an item I should have addressed last week but didn't become... well, because I'm an idiot some times. (Out to the legion of Don Judds out there reading furiously: I love you, too.)

As I mentioned in this year's column last fall, the local do gooders from **we serve music** is presenting a Vietnam band showcase at this year's Search for Soul Festival in Austin, Texas. As I believe I also mentioned, I was asked to be part of the panel of local music know-it-alls tasked with deciding who, of the crop of locals that applied to be part of SSCSW, would make the cut to appear at the largest live music event on the planet in March. Well, after much discussion and debate, we have figured that out: **Go (South) West, Young Man! (And Women!)** — **WARRIORS**, **THE IMPERIAL**, **THEYREYES**, **LOWELL**, **THEPAIN**, **ZERO CIRCLE**, **GET A GRIP** and **the GOAT**.

Not bad, right?

I'm going to go out on a limb and give most readers are familiar with these first three bands, as they're among the better-known acts that call

the Green Mountains home. The other three, however, might be a bit of a mystery to most of you. So just who the hell are these folks?

Good question!

Zero Circle are a Burlington six-rock band formed by **WARRIORS**, a profoundly talented vocalist perhaps best known for his time in the **ONCE**s, a Vermont pop-punk band that had a cup of coffee with **Island/Def Jam** about three years back. **Ungency** fans will likely dig ZC, too, though the latter band's eclectic pop-punk inclinations are tempered by a harder instrumental edge. **Angry teenage me loves this shit. (Given local do-gooders meeting me thinks it's pretty good, too.)**

Not to delve into the sausage-making process too deeply, but two things the SSCSW panel collectively agreed were important in making our decisions were to look beyond Burlington and to find representation from the state's hardcore/punk scene. **Karlton's Get a Grip**, likely the reigning kings of local hardcore, were a natural choice, fitting both categories. Also, they rock wicked hard.

That brings us to my favorite selection of the bunch: **BurritoBoro** **WARRIORS** **the** **Swan**. If that name sounds familiar, it could be because you heard them when they were finalists in the NPR **Seattle** **Best** **of** **the** **High**

School Bands in 2012. There's right: The **Swan** members are in high school and range in age from 14 to 16. And they're really, really good. Look for a review of their debut record in the coming weeks.

(Also, the **Swan** must have the coolest parents in the world to let them travel to SSCSW 1000 two years ago and still can't believe I wasn't required to have parental supervision.)

Anyway, the point of all of this is to let you know that you can catch all six bands at a showcase a little closer to home on Wednesday, February 15, otherwise known as the street date of this week's issue. (See: Shoulda written about this last week, I'm an idiot, above.)

To help defray travel expenses, **BHW** is providing a **transit** at **Main Street Landing** in Burlington. Obviously showing up in person to lend your emotional — and financial! — support is preferred. But if you can't make it, you can watch via live stream thanks to **BETH**, which will host the streaming video on its website as well as on **BHW**, and make it available to local TV stations. For a complete list of those, visit **highwaywork.com**, where you can also find info about donating to the cause.

soundbites: 8-PAGE

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I HAVE TO WRITE SONGS AND SING AND PLAY

JAMIE LEE THURSTON

Thurstin' for More

do I have to write songs and sing and play? You can easily get depressed and want to give up. It gets low and can seem so hopeless. But the highs are so high, too. When you're playing a show and everybody is loving it, it doesn't get better than that.

Q: You're working on a new record. What can you tell me about it?

A: I think it's the best thing I've ever done. I grew up on '70s pop and AC/DC and Judas Priest and Johnny Cash and Blue Oyster Cult. So you kinda see all that together and then basically where I've landed with this record. It's never bigger and it's not me a ton of money, but it's what I really wanted to do.

Q: So it's almost as much a rock record as it is a country record?

A: Sort of. It's a country singer so anything I do would sound country but there is some rock 'n' roll, hard shit on this record.

Q: Modern country music is an interesting place, where so much of it is barely distinguishable from Top 40 pop. To quote: Waylon, 'Are you sure Hank don't like you?'

A: I think it's kind of exciting that it really is. Some people might hear me say that and think, wow grapes! But I love everything about it. I want to turn on the radio and go "fuck yeah!" for the most part, I tune on the radio and go "fuck. Really?"

Q: Are you sure you really want to be a part of that?

A: Well, I look at this way. If you're been a carpenter for 20 years, chances are you can build a pretty damn good house. I know I'm good. And it's not because I'm "good" because I'm not. But I've tagged the time and worked hard. So maybe there is still a place for well-crafted music in the end.

I had a friend who told me 98 percent of the people who try to become stars don't make it. But that means that somebody has to be part of that 2 percent. So why not me?

Q: You dad is quite a character. What was it like growing up with Jimmy T. as your dad?

A: That's one way to put it. [Laughs] You have no idea. I don't know how much of that would be printable. But my dad is a monster. It's a great dad. I mean I learned so much other stuff from people in his band, who were just one step from people I graduated high school and went on the road with his band. I was a roadie at 18 in the summer. So I experienced every level, from setting up the stage to playing on it. I owe everything I am, whatever I am, to him. ☺

Contact: jamie@jameelthurston.com

INFO

Jamie Lee Thurston, Friday, February 23, 8 p.m. at the Roxy, 101 N. State. (202) 242-2424. jameelthurston.com

music

CLUB DATES

ALL INFORMATION IS AS LISTED

WED.18

burlington

ARTIST: Kaitlyn Rose
presenting Coda, 8 p.m. (10 p.m. cover), 8 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

HALF-PALOUSE SPOKESTEAR
Walter Henderson (live)
Tuesdays, 9:30 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

JP SPIN Pub Spin with Dave 7
p.m. (10 p.m. cover) Karaoke with Moby
9 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

JAMMER Tupper Hutton
Quoted (live), 8 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

LEMONS & LIME & CAFE
Auntie (live), 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

LIGHT CLUB LAMP Spin
DJ's (live), 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

MONSTER PIZZA & PUB
Open Mic with Andy Lugo 8
p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

MYSTIC 5 WY Comedy Club
Presenting Mike & John Comedy
Open Mic (10 p.m. cover) 7
p.m. (10 p.m. cover) 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

NOON PIZZA & PUB
DJ's (live), 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

THE MONKEY PINOCCHIO
DJ's (live), 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

THE MONKEY PINOCCHIO
DJ's (live), 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

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THE MONKEY PINOCCHIO
DJ's (live), 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)



THU.19 (1) AT SPIN ROCK (10 p.m.)

Word Up

According to a 2014 study by data scientist Matt Daniels comparing the number of unique words used within various hip-hop artists' first 15,000 lyrics, **AKAAR** was the wordiest rapper in history. That's probably not news to fans of the San Francisco-based rapper, who has long experimented — and befuddled — fans and critics with his hyper-literate flow. But check this out: The percentage of analog words found in AKAAR's work compares favorably to that of some literary classics, including *Moby-Dick* and selected works by William Shakespeare. In other words, *Akkaar* speaks a vocabulary right up there with the Bard. As our Rock plays the *Bligher Ground* Ballroom in South Burlington this Thursday, February 13, with **BOB SONG** and **MONKEY PINOCCHIO** firing a cannon.

northeast kingdom

THE PAPER PIE DJ: Drew
Nights, 12 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)
WED. 18: 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)
THU. 19: 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

outside vermont

MONOPOLY Open Mic, 10 p.m.
WED. 18: 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)
THU. 19: 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

THU.19

burlington

ARTIST: Chorus Night Club
Tuesdays, 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

CLUB MONOPOLY Open Mic, 10 p.m.
WED. 18: 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)
THU. 19: 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

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CLUB MONOPOLY Open Mic, 10 p.m.
WED. 18: 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)
THU. 19: 10 p.m. (10 p.m. cover)

THIS IS A P.E.

FRI.20

burlington

NETWORKS [Various]
[contemporary/indie music]
7:30 p.m. \$40

REVIEWS Open-house celebration
Jam 10 p.m. free

BLUE NORTHEAST TALK-HOOD
John Whitehead [rock] 9:30 p.m. free

CLUB METRONOME Tom
Hawes & The Money Bag
Ethos Music [R&B] 9 p.m.
\$10-15 10+ Beer to the End new
Friday 120-002284 [dance party]
9 p.m. \$5

WEDNESDAY'S FIVE DJ Jon Smith
[electronic] 10 p.m. free

FRANKY 87 The Village [rock]
9 p.m. free

HAULDRIDGE SPECIALTY
Joel Deblin [new experimental]
7 to 10 p.m. [open bar] [rock] 10
p.m. free

JUNGLES Open-house [rock]
9:30 p.m. free

LOVE! CLAVE LAB Thompson
Ryan Davies [rock] 9 p.m. free

HANDED TALK FIVE & FIVE The
Honeybees [rock] 9 p.m. free

NEEDLES & Saws Hammer [rock]
[contemporary] 7:30 p.m. free

NEE TONES Larry 18 Hickey
Therapy Session & Louis Hickey
[rock] 9 p.m. free

RADIO REAR CONVICTION
Friday Music [rock] 7 p.m. [free]
with Louisa-Rose & Philo
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

SOUL [contemporary] 9:30
p.m. free

THE BROTHERHOOD [contemporary]
9 p.m. free

THE BROTHERHOOD [contemporary]
9 p.m. free

THE BROTHERHOOD [contemporary]
9 p.m. free

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THE BROTHERHOOD [contemporary]
9 p.m. free

THE BROTHERHOOD [contemporary]
9 p.m. free

THE BROTHERHOOD [contemporary]
9 p.m. free

THE BROTHERHOOD [contemporary]
9 p.m. free

JAMES MOORE TWEED [rock]
[contemporary] 8 p.m. free

RENOVO [rock] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

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THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

THE HOLEY HOLEY [rock]
[contemporary] 9 p.m. free

SAT.21

burlington

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

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REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free



THE 24 (1) THE LONG BELLOW (JAMES MOORE)

Morning Has Broken Though it's not an overtly religious work, *Then Came the Morning*, the second album by Burlington's *the long bellow*, has spiritual quality. Produced by Aaron Denner of the National, the album was recorded in the sanctuary of an old church turned studio in upstate New York. For that reason—and for the powerful yet delicate interweaving of lyrical imagery, the stirring vocals and the haunting chamber-like arrangements—the record achieves something close to divine. The band plays Arkitekt in Burlington on Tuesday, February 24, with tickets

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

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REVIEWS [Various] 7:30 p.m. free

REVIEW *this*

Alpenglow, Chapel EP

(REVIEWED ON RECORDS, CD, DIGITAL, DOWNLOADS, MP3)

Vermont indie-folk band Alpenglow left the Green Mountains for Brooklyn last year, despite the copious, but perhaps tongue-in-cheek, advice of Wilco's Jeff Tweedy not to do so. Really, the move was a natural and obvious one. Few local groups have ever succeeded so readily as the Middlebury College-born quartet, who were among the state's most buzzed-about bands even before their 2013 debut, *Alpenglow EP*, began garnering national attention.

But as much as it was a logical career move — it's just easier to be a touring band based in Brooklyn than in Vermont — it was also artistically motivated. The lone

line of *Alpenglow* was that its influences were sometimes too clearly evident — most obviously the haunting isolation of the Low Anthem. It's fit to assume some of that sound stemmed from the haunting isolation of Vermont itself. As cofounder Graham Dunsbert put it in a 2013 interview with *Stoner Days*, "Canoeing is an important part of the music we make."

As the band members began to nurture their own sound, it was natural that they

sought a change of context — and scenery. Indeed, Dunsbert revealed that Brooklyn has inspired a new musical direction for Alpenglow. We won't know what form that will take until the band releases its next album, presumably later this year. In the meantime, Alpenglow have put out a new recording, Chapel EP, that should show incredible fans and tame the page on the band's Vermont chapter.

Chapel is in some ways an extension of *Alpenglow*. For one thing, it was recorded in the same sessions as that debut. But Chapel is a more assured and fully realized recording than its predecessor. Aside for that belongs, to some degree, with Jesse Laster, who mixed the EP — and, not coincidentally, produced and engineered two Low Anthem records.

Chapel EP has the same expansive quality that was evident on *Alpenglow*, but it's brought into sharper, almost cinematic focus here. In particular, the contrast between Dunsbert's wails, pure-toned vocals and the intricate instrumental interplay behind him creates a mood that's both starkly chilling and serenely comforting.

The best example of this is "Old Country." The song begins with Dunsbert singing unaccompanied, his hollow tenor

echoing as though from some great, empty place. This is eventually cut with a phalanx of guitars and drums that gently build to a swirling vocal chorus before transitioning into a shifting kaleidoscope of sounds and a thunderous finale. It may be the most ambitious Alpenglow song to date, and the clearest indication of the band's capabilities as they discover their own unique sound.

In truth, the EP is littered with subtle examples of the band's unconcern for the whimsical charm of opener "Gabriel," its meandering, high lonesome sound of "Shout It Out," and the ethereal hit of "Brothers in Crime." As much as Chapel is a companion to *Alpenglow*, and assuming the band doesn't completely abandon its scenic balladry in Brooklyn, the EP may ultimately serve as a bridge to whatever new direction the band is forging. That alone makes it a deeply inspiring work, as well as a find forward travel to Vermont.

Alpenglow play the Higher Ground Showcase Lounge in North Burlington this Friday, February 30, with *And the Kids and the Sun Parade*. Chapel EP is available at seccommusic.com.

DAN ELLER

SCAN THIS PAGE WITH I APP
TO LISTEN TO MUSIC



I See Fish People, Guitar in the Shallows

(REVIEWED ON RECORDS, CD, DIGITAL, DOWNLOADS, MP3)

If a fish story underwater does it make a sound? If it did, Ben Maddox, formerly of the Brooklyn-based folk-rock trio Pines, would probably be there to hear it. As *Seven Days* reported in 2013, Pines began producing a web series of HD underwater videos, documenting various fish found in Vermont's lakes and ponds and setting the creature's movements to the band's instrumental tunes. Unfitted in some gear and using waterproof video equipment, Maddox and company would drop into the water and creep out, capturing interactions among the aquatic critters and, later, pairing the video with their experimental rock. Debuting *I See Fish People*, the series is now in its third season.

Though Pines are no longer recording, Maddox finds musical building for the series by continuing to produce his own songs and recruiting others — including fellow former Pines band Jedd Miller — to help out. In December 2014, Maddox released a collection of 11 new fish songs, *Guitar in the Shallows*.

Miller and Maddox, who now perform together in the Mountain Sings No appear on the second number, "Treat River." However, most of the album credit goes to Maddox, who contributed all but one track, "Barren Green River." Bassists in Barren

Douglas of Burlington exploits the Cash, RTW hits reverberating, shimmering guitar suggests sunlight gleaming through muddy waters.

With the exception of "Night Fish" and "Through the Ice," which push the edges of psychedelic rock, the album opens across an ambient space of serene night sounds or relaxed guitar segments. Back as a simple guitar line and fast, plucking beats, "Berlin Pond" evokes a jagged, long-out-of-the-ocean vibe. Though it's a noticeable departure from the rest of the

album, "Rings of the Border" showcases Maddox's late electric guitar chops. As less than two minutes, it's a swirling, pulsing track with global influences.

"Langley Bridge" is an unbridled study of the overly strummed dulcimer. Close "The Fathers of the West" as a long string, dense electric guitar solo that evokes the breadth and depth of Vermont's waters and the creature that inhabit them.

Striding alone, *Guitar in the Shallows* is a well-crafted collection of guitar-driven songs. When paired with high-quality video of grumpy-looking layabouts haw bearded brown bullheads, or slyly chiseled pike, it's a comedy of conflict and shift journey. For best listening, throw the DVD on the big screen, crank a beer, and let the guitar legend of nature and the ocean take you away. Pure ecological education, pure instrumental experimentation — and, in a way, pure performance art — *Guitar in the Shallows* is no normal bass range experience.

Chapel in the Shallows is available at weirdpeople.bandcamp.com.

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2005-2014 7:30 p.m. downtown

MODS 5 PLACE, John Wilcox &
Friends (local) near here

northeast kingdom

THE STAGE Open House 8 p.m. downtown

MON.23

Burlington

FRANBY 8.5, **Shawnee Cemetery Caper**
March 8 10 p.m.

BALLOONING SPAREPARTS Family
Night (open) 10:30 p.m. free

JO 5 FIVE, **Center Street Request**
Night with Locals 10 p.m. free

JUNIPER Thru Night 7 p.m. free

LIGHT CLUB LAMP DROG Open
House (open) 10:30 p.m. free

MANHATTAN PIZZA & PUB, **Barbecue**
8 p.m. free

MELTIN 8 Up and Beating (local) 8
p.m. free 10-12

RAVENS BEAN COFFEEHOUSE, **For**
Southern (open) 10:30 p.m. free

2 p.m. free **Manhattan Pizza** (local) 8
p.m. free **Light Club LAMP DROG** Open
House (open) 10:30 p.m. free

THE SWEET PARADISE
(Burlington), **Katy Malar** with
Baroque 11:30 p.m. 12 downtown

South Art New Center (open) 10:30 p.m. free

chittenden county
ON TAP BAR & BGR, **Open House** with
Wylie 10 p.m. free

stowe/sunape area

MODS 5 PLACE, **John Wilcox** (local)
10:30 p.m. free

northeast kingdom

THE STAGE, **Open House** (local) 10:30 p.m. free

TUE.24

Burlington

WATERBURY, **The Lane** (local) 10:30 p.m. free

CLUB METROPHONE, **Sound** (local) 10:30 p.m. free

FRANBY 8.5, **Shawnee Cemetery Caper**
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To Hell and Back

TOM MAXWELL is best known as the former singer of the now-famous band **Squirrel Nut Zippers**, who burst onto the popular consciousness in 1996 with their hit single, "Ho-He." Maxwell left SNZ in 1999 and has been in self-described "semi-retirement" since. But now he's back with a swingin' new band, **TO HELL AND BACK**, and an epic new record. He's also got a new mission, **My Life in the Squirrel Nut Zippers**. By name, his new record and his new band, the book details the unlikely rise and perhaps inevitable fall of the Zippers. Catch Tom Maxwell & the Minor Drag at Club Metaphors in Burlington this Friday, February 20, with local accompanist **JOEY HARRIS**.

JOEY HARRIS, **My Life in the Squirrel Nut Zippers** 8 p.m. free

chittenden county

THE HIGHER HOUSE, **Good** (local) 10:30 p.m. free

ON TAP BAR & BGR, **Open House** with
Wylie 10 p.m. free

stowe/sunape area

MODS 5 PLACE, **John Wilcox** (local) 10:30 p.m. free

THE STAGE, **Open House** (local) 10:30 p.m. free

CLUB METROPHONE, **Sound** (local) 10:30 p.m. free

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House (open) 10:30 p.m. free

WED.25

Burlington

CLUB METROPHONE, **Sound** (local) 10:30 p.m. free

ON TAP BAR & BGR, **Open House** with
Wylie 10 p.m. free

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Night with Locals 10 p.m. free

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Sticks and Stones

BY XIAN CHIH-NG WAREN

For most painters, making an image when brush is put to canvas isn't far from Nick Neddo, a wilderness skills instructor and artist living in Montpelier; the creative process begins with the paint itself. For the past five years, the Vermont native has made his own art supplies from foraged roots, clay, sticks and stones.

"There's already hours and hours and hours of work before the ink even touches the paper," said Neddo, who's in his mid-thirties. "By the time I touch a piece of art with materials that I've wildcrafted, there's a much bigger context around it."

On a bright morning in early February, Neddo, clad in a leather shirt belted around his waist, invited a reporter into his studio. It's located on a mountainous, unpaved road just a 15-minute drive from the Vermont Arts Council's Spotlight Gallery, where an exhibit of Neddo's paintings and drawings is on display this month.

A quick look around the loft-style workspace revealed his handmade studio of handmade woven baskets, leather bags and raw-yet-transformed furry hides. There there rose the artwork. The walls were hung with Neddo's pencil drawings and paintings of trees, flora and wildlife; his desk was covered with surprisingly elegant handmade pointy brushes, charcoal sticks, pencils and paper.

Downstairs in the kitchen, summer leaves remained in a Crock-Pot, warming into soup. Neddo's current project was a drawing of some plants made with materials he'd sustainably harvested.

"This is the first time I've made natural ink, so I have no idea how it's going to behave," the artist said. "It's like unlocking some of its secrets. It's still learning me in, you know?"

Neddo shares some of the secrets of natural materials that he has already "wildcrafted" in his recently published first book, *The Organic Artist: Make Your Own Paint, Paper, Pigments, Prints and More From Nature*, in a cookbook-style guide to wildcrafting art supplies, ranging from simple charcoal sticks to natural inks.

"I love drawing and painting and I love wilderness stuff," Neddo explained. "Something happened in the past few years where I got tired of companion using one or the other of these two large passions in my life."

So five years ago Neddo challenged himself to an experiment: He would create art materials using only ancient tools. He



Nick Neddo at his studio in Montpelier, Vermont

BY THE TIME I FINISH A PIECE OF ART WITH MATERIALS THAT I'VE WILDCRAFTED, THERE'S A MUCH BIGGER CONTEXT AROUND IT.

NICK NEDDO



recorded and tested extensively, then shared his initial findings with a working class for young adults at central Vermont's BOOTS School. In 2013, Neddo got a call from an editor at Quarry Books about seeing his work in the wilderness program's website.

Having recently emerged from 18 months into more writing and illustrating — "It's amazing I still have a place to live, and a girlfriend," he quipped — Neddo sat down with *Esquire* to talk creating the stone age and human survival.

SEVEN DAYS: What's the value of making art with handmade supplies?

NICK NEDDO: I think that's yet to be determined. For me, I can say that it's more valuable than what I was doing before I was making my art supplies. I was using just modern, manufactured pens and doing like, pure line drawings with cross-hatching. When I had the idea to start getting into my own art supplies, I was kind of reluctant at first. It seemed messy and cumbersome and, like, redundant.

But when I started making my own pens from turkey feathers and my own ink

from, you know, pine soot and other stuff... I realized that before I even put the pen onto the paper, the art project had started long ago.

SD: Does that inform what you draw or paint?

NNE: It can. I go back to my need to do that place in the forest where I found that pine stump, or got the soot to make the ink. For me, the value is increased just because I feel more connected to the process, and to the landscape, which is kind of my whole goal.

SD: Does that connection inspire you? Is the landscape your muse?

NNE: I dedicated my book to the muse, wherever she is. I personally the muse as, like, country embodied... And I've learned to recognize, "Am I inspired?" Oh, yeah? OK, making the muses right now? Which also creates problems, because I might be inspired all night. I might be inspired for two days straight. But creativity is a gift. I think it's a gift from our species. It's like one of our superpowers.

childtenden county

Q: CHRONOGRAPHY: A PHOTO EXHIBITION A chronograph is the instrument that measures the hours and minutes (left to right). January 2014 through February 2015. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

KEITH VANDERKAM drawings in pencil and charcoal. watercolor, and mixed media. A portrait of the artist at work. Through March 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

WIKILIFE: THE JOURNAL when photography is not just a record of what is, but a way of seeing. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

Q: NATIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY FROM ART **WILHELM VON HUGO** 1800-1864. A portrait of the artist at work. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

STUDENT DRAWING AND PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW Photographs by Mount Mansfield Union-High School students. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

barre/montpelier

THIS OUT OF THE WORLD: RECONSTRUCTION A portrait of the artist at work. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

ANNO More than 20 hours of work in pencil, charcoal, and watercolor. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

ART OF PLACE: A portrait of the artist at work in pencil, charcoal, and watercolor. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

ACQUITTING The lives of the artist at work. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.



'Subtle, Not Subtle: Evocative Nuance' A new exhibit at Stowe's West Branch Gallery & Sculpture Park bids viewers to appreciate the "delicate complexity" in the works of four accomplished artists. Gorgeous and evocative abstract landscapes by Helen Shulman, Janis Pezold-Adamsen and Marc Christman are accompanied by Jonathan Prince's steel sculptures. "These artists invite the viewer to join them in the act of contemplation and to explore nuance and subtlety in a wordless, evocative way," says Karen Kadane. The result, she adds, is "a powerful experience — emotional earthquakes that are anything but subtle." Through June 1, with an artist's reception on Saturday, February 28, 6-8:30 p.m. Pictured: "Presence" by Shulman.

DANIEL ANDREW & SCOTT KANE "Terra Munda" is a portrait of the artist at work. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

GLENN CORBIN MONTGOMERY A portrait of the artist at work. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

JACQUE SMITH A portrait of the artist at work. Through February 2015. Info: 330-3345. Burlington Children's Museum.

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Lenny's Snow and Apparel, Rome
Wolcott, St Albans
and Flandersburg

Lullwater Ski and Fitness,
Lullwater, NH

Mass River Lodge, St Albans

Oliver and Bab's, Jackson

Oliver River Sports Mart, Putney

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Mart, Putney

Sundance Boutique, St Albans

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art



Katie Runde South Boylston artist Katie Runde is a painter and illustrator who creates wonderfully lifelike renderings of people, animals and natural scenes. An exhibit of Runde's works in oil, graphite and colored pencil is currently on view at the Boylston Memorial Library. "I aim to use [different media] in such a way that their individual materials sink to the background to leave room for the subject to shine," the artist writes in a statement. "There is enough lightness and anxiety in the world. With my work, I aim to call forth the strength and depth of life that adapts and endures." Through Saturday, March 3, with an artist's reception on Thursday, March 8, 8-7 pm. **Pinchard • Hamrick • Dotte • Steinert •**

STORY/PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRY B. PIVOT

SLIPS STYLE They're the fully armed and dangerous in slippers with a kick, in addition to the show on television. **Homey** slippers, through October 31, 2013, 1000 Vermont St. and Grandview Museum in Waterbury.

read view online/centerbury

ARTIST'S CHOICE (Lynn Goss) - Slippers are more than just slippers. They are a part of our lives. Through February 29, 2014, 1000 Vermont St. and Grandview Museum in Waterbury.

RED FRANK WHITE & VAPOR (Burlington) - Slippers are more than just slippers. They are a part of our lives. Through March 31, 2014, 1000 Vermont St. and Grandview Museum in Waterbury.

SLIPPER (Burlington) - Slippers are more than just slippers. They are a part of our lives. Through March 31, 2014, 1000 Vermont St. and Grandview Museum in Waterbury.

SLIPPER (Burlington) - Slippers are more than just slippers. They are a part of our lives. Through March 31, 2014, 1000 Vermont St. and Grandview Museum in Waterbury.

middlebury area

CLARK KIRBY (Middlebury) - Slippers are more than just slippers. They are a part of our lives. Through March 31, 2014, 1000 Vermont St. and Grandview Museum in Waterbury.

JOE ROSS (Middlebury) - Slippers are more than just slippers. They are a part of our lives. Through March 31, 2014, 1000 Vermont St. and Grandview Museum in Waterbury.

ARTIST'S CHOICE (Lynn Goss) - Slippers are more than just slippers. They are a part of our lives. Through February 29, 2014, 1000 Vermont St. and Grandview Museum in Waterbury.

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CALL TO ARTISTS

CITYWIDE FINE-ARTS HOUSING PROJECT ONE AKA IN CALLING FOR ARTISTS

WOMEN TO FINE-ARTS HOUSING PROJECT ONE AKA IN CALLING FOR ARTISTS. For a full housing project, we will be looking for artists to create art in the form of home and include community and social space throughout and throughout the project. We are looking for artists to create art in the form of home and include community and social space throughout and throughout the project. We are looking for artists to create art in the form of home and include community and social space throughout and throughout the project.

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JASON BRUNEAU & MICHAEL FURROW Visual artists from the local art scene. Through February 22, 1000 Main St. in Burlington. Openings: 1000 Main St. in Burlington.

upper valley

BRUNEAU & FURROW Visual artists from the local art scene. Through February 22, 1000 Main St. in Burlington. Openings: 1000 Main St. in Burlington.

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movies

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Kingsman: The Secret Service



Country-plantation. The definition of the word is the release of veteran-director Matthew Vaughn's mischievous, psychobabble and cool-as-a-butter pants to the British spy film (Kingsman in retail terms) on the same week and righty shakes of Troy's last actions. Except for its instantly cheeky final scene, I doubt it works in any way with the allegations of E.L. James' 'bawdiness'. There's Kingsman's mission — at least from its studio's point of view — and it accomplishes it with kinetic brioise and style.

Vaughn may need some introductions. He cut his teeth as a producer of Guy Ritchie's first film, two of which — *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* (1998) and *Snatch* (2000) — are loose film exercises of an English gentleman goes the past virtually unseen. In 2006, Vaughn made his directorial debut with the crime drama *Liverpool*, which starred a pre-Bond Daniel Craig and which you must drop everything to see (you haven't). Film such as *Stander* (2007) and *Jackass* (2010) followed.

It's tempting to regard Kingsman simply as a Bond reboot aimed at millennials. The mature-shaking spy's legacy certainly is the

heart of the enterprise. It offers sophisticated wit on local politics, smart machines, sexy women and colorful bad guys. It's cool, how ever, may be the most intriguing part of the picture.

It is after all, the story of a street tough (Taron Egerton) who finds his place in the world when a debonair manager (Colin Firth) welcomes him into a society of covert ops. The theme must have special resonance for the filmmaker, who (I suspect) grew up believing his father was Robert Vaughn, star of the spy series *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*

With that bit of background it's possible to view Vaughn's films as a series of colorful bloodbaths in a sort of dressing-gown, candy-colored bloodbath. Firth is a revelation in the role of Harry Hart, a dandy dandy who takes a term named Egerton under his wing because the boy's father died saving Hart's life years earlier. The kid undertakes training with a group of prebent ops. He through them by the grace of his father's name. Kingsman's students with dreams of interest in weapons instead of sugar waste dancing in their beds.

One of the candidates, Koxy, is played by Sophie Cookson, and it's worth noting that the film's creators set a watch against her gender parity with her role. She beats the boys



FIRTH AND FORTHWELL The Oscar-winner adds 'action hero' to his resume with a performance that's nothing short of spectacular

at their own game. She doesn't fall as low as the angry rocks, and unlike him is not made of the fact.

Samuel L. Jackson plays logging tech billionaire Valentine. His diabolical scheme is to reverse global warming by nuking the planet of Kansas City — at least the 90 percent who can't afford education to his luxury spa-spa-spa hotel. Little do people suspect that the few wooden screws he doesn't get the world can be used to broadcast a signal that will transform everyone into homicidal monsters.

The film's most controversial sequence features a hyper stylized massacre at a hate-mongering church. In a million years, anybody watching The King's Speech couldn't

imagine that one day the Oscar winner would dress himself in a house of warping around with a bullet-proof umbrella. But he put did. Somewhere, Thornton is looking himself.

Kingsman won't be everyone's cup of Earl Grey. But it does what it sets out to do — namely give the half-century old 007 tradition a fun, thoroughly anti-fuck-it. Vaughn has always been driven to eye-popping visuals, and here he pulls out all the stops. He later to a rousing, dancing blast and a half that, by infusing the genre with fresh ideas and energy, does it a service unlikely to stay a secret.

RICK KIDNANE

Fifty Shades of Grey



I went to *Fifty Shades of Grey* prepared to mock it mercilessly. But over the course of last weekend something happened. As I finished the 300,000+ commentaries that dissected *Fifty Shades* in the definition section on female sexuality, recent movie reviews, the sexual repression, modern depravity, misogynistic chauvinism about creative sexuality and an on-again, I found myself agreeing more and more with an critic: reader I understood last week. Not a fan of E.L. James' best-selling series, she nonetheless wished every body else "What up about it?" "It's funny," she said, "experienced." "It's great!"

Indeed, and maybe we shouldn't judge people by the content of their fantasies, whether those fantasies involve remorseless, sadistic master (the focus of many an action film), or getting tied up by a clumsy billionaire.

Becoming fiction is such a private thing, however, the transition from page to screen does involve editorial interpretation and contact with real realities. Idealized characters must be replaced with real actors, to say nothing of realistic ones.

Stories like *Fifty Shades of Grey* are fiction, as is its world, and how it feels to see *Fifty Shades* when it's fantasy is not your own. In my experience, the film is sometimes boring to a non-fan. Sometimes confusing. As pretty as an episode from *Mad Men* it

enthralls. And not nearly as square as it is expected to be.

Let's address "boring" first. As everyone probably knows by now, once upon a time there was a wife college senior named Anastasia Steele (Dakota Johnson) who met a big bad richly handsome billionaire with intense interest in her. In the series, Christian Grey (Jamie Dornan) buys her luxury goods and often her covered place in the scheme, an occupant of his private sex dungeons, all officiated by a contract. Ana says yes to the sex, but doesn't on the paperwork. This happens repeatedly until the movie ends — or, really, well along.

When a film is essentially just about two characters negotiating an off-the-planet ship, they need to be likable. And Johnson's Ana is. Gone is every book. Ana's first-person narration is no longer what we witness her efforts to follow every wild sexual impulse on her "never problem." Despite some by being and whining, this Ana comes her distance and, as a few scenes, even calls Christian out on his creepy insistence on controlling every aspect of her life.

That's where the movie gets confusing, because Ana's self-protection comes and goes like the March wind. A glance from those grey eyes, or a hint of Christian's twisted idealized notions to make her forget how often he's a horny guy. Dornan was intensely creepy as the British actor "The Kid,"



GREY MATTER Ana doesn't always see him, when she's up with Christian in Taylor Jenkins' adaptation of the best seller

but there he played a character, not a fantasy figure. Here he is, in most scenes disoriented, to show us just what Ana is so dumb as to consent to.

Director Sam Taylor-Johnson gives the Steele out film as elegant, understated look and a silver-grey sheen, distancing it from the more lurid aspects of its source material. Even the sex scenes tend to be pastoral, following the good tradition of arty adult-on-adult.

All these choices work to make *Fifty Shades* a more tolerable experience for non-fans of the books than it might have been. A

more adventurous writer and director could have turned this twisted fairy tale into a full-fledged novel, far from *50 Shades*. Such an *Abroad* using its incoherence as a means. But James, who walked considerable control over this production, rarely would have given her OK to such escapes.

In any case, the reality of *Fifty Shades* was long so required by the theory of discussion around it. Perhaps it is time for a lot of us to recognize that fantasies come in a great many more than 50 shades — and that they're not real.

HAROLD HARRISON

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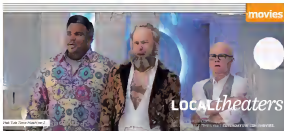
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DUFFY AND CUNNINGHAM took the red-wings east down Lloyd and Harry [John Curry and Jeff Lewis] to the Curry 22 years after their first come-dynasty professional family reunion to back the sequel. (P) 1999 PG-13.

THE POLICEMAN ~~is~~ a spender in number
between (story taken) taken on the dangerous
risk of choosing to that damaged woman back
and in this effort under control of ambivalence
by turning to 2000 1000 000 000

THE PATRIOT★★★ Seth Rogen and James Franco play leaders of TV personnel who've had themselves more tied to an over-the-top attack on North Korea. Kim Jong Un is this comedy's 100 men to watch for 14.4.13

LIFE ITSELF ********* More Jesus documentary records the life and times of the late-beloved son of the Virgin Mary, with appearances from Werner Herzog, Victor Sjöström and others. (PG-13) **B** (Reviewed by R. C. TROT)

50 **WILSON** **★** **101** Murray plays a cartoonist who warms up the kids' annual meeting by war of his wife's new lighting. [PG-13: PG-13] as in a comedy from writer-director Theodore Melfi (2002's *PG-13*)

THE TALE OF THE PRINCESS KAGUYA ◆◆◆◆◆
The tale of an evil emperor from Japan's feudal times
is based on a folktale about a girl found under a
bamboo tree. From Tokuharu Niimura (CIB) via PG.

THE THEORY OF EXPONENTS AND UNITS OF IDEALS
by JOHN COHEN



MOVIES YOU MISSED

[illegible]Did you mean: **VENEZUELA IN FLAM**

I am expecting to which two variables did the quote, whereas the following one about chemistry I am expecting (or hoping for) elements at high comp. What I am not expecting from Fifty Shades of Grey is anything runs about the role of data science and education in it and research.

No. For insight into the culture of whips, chains and leg-irons see *Slavery on Screen*. I turned to David Lee 2000 play *Venus in Fur* (adapted for the screen by Roman Polanski and now available on Netflix Ireland). It proved to be about as representative as an only two characters drama confined to a single location with virtually no nudity can be. That is, a lot.

In the House: No Offense! Many thanks, every Friday I review movies that were brought to my ead by reader or fan feedback for Stewart's multi-talents.

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CAR POLO

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IMPROVED HIS CAR, AND
STARTED PLAYING
FOR THE



TENNIS BY FURY



UNBOIS, SAILING



THAT FINEBALL

Curses, Felled Again

Jeffrey Wood, 18, announced a robbery at a convenience store in Washington, DC, where two police detectives were shopping. They were in plain clothes, but one had her badge hanging from her neck. He told the suspect, "Stop playing. I got 127" referring to the number of bullets in her gun. Wood reportedly replied, "I got 12, too." He was blabbing, however, and was easily arrested. (Washington Post)

Someone reported two men acting suspiciously in a parking lot in Berkeley, Calif., but before police could respond, the men, where they had been observed, announced they had been discovered by undercover officers. They called 911 and admitted to possessing 20 pounds of marijuana. Berkeley police, who said they had no idea the men were dealing through town with drugs, arrived to find Leland Gray Katsipoulos Ayala-Belmont, 31, and Craig Stewart, 32, standing outside their car with the pot. (Berkeley Hills State Journal)

Victim of The Week

Adam Wonsiaty, 31, rode his bicycle to a Chicago police station to report a stolen iPhone. He didn't have his lock, so he asked if he could leave his bike inside the station. After filling out a police report, he turned around to find

someone had stolen his bike. (Chicago's WBBM Radio)

Forgive and Forget

After Charles and Charles Earle drove to a hospital in Orange City, Fla., for treatment of injuries from a fight at home, sheriff's deputies described the couple as "mutual combatants." Earle is 63, 6 feet 10 inches tall and weighs 461 pounds. Charles Earle is 67. They've been married 64 years. They told authorities they didn't remember the incident or why they were arguing. (Daytona Beach News-Journal)

When Guns Are Outlawed

Pelosi said Andrew Laik, 38, discussed WU Flanagan, the former mayor of Red River, Minn., with arrested witnesses used a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Laik reportedly stole the prop weapons from Flanagan's SUV, along with other items, including a small concrete baseball bat, which he smashed against the ground outside Flanagan's apartment while stating he was going to "kill the mayor."

Flanagan, who was ousted from office by a recall election in December, confronted Laik, who said, "I'm going to kill you. You lost the election." (Red River's Herald News)

Authorities charged Tawana Brawley, 54, with murdering her 46-year-old friend by beating her over the head with a shoe cinder and tying the cord around her neck. The incident occurred while the two residents of a senior housing complex in Lincoln, Mich., argued over "presidential politics." Brawley's lawyer said, and "whatever the controversy is between Democrats and Republicans." (Detroit News)

Mr. Unlucky

Motorist Michael Morrist Michael Durrell Isaacs, 50, from behind in Indian Hills, Ky. Witnesses confirmed that Isaacs was signaling a left turn when he was struck and thrown back into the car's windshield and on to the pavement. Police Chief Kelly Spratt said Isaacs is likely to be alive. Isaacs is a well-known personal injury attorney who markets

himself as the "Heavy Hitter" and the "Kentucky Hammer" for his firm's success in recovering \$500 million in benefits for his clients. (Louisville Courier-Journal)

Buzz Kill

Spanish authorities on the resort island of Ibiza said Dariusz Dymowski, 29, was so excited when her boyfriend proposed to her at a wedding and overlooking the Mediterranean Sea that she began jumping up and down, lost her balance and fell 65 feet to her death. (Ibiza's Daily Mail)

Insensitivity Lessons

The Irish school Galisteo State in Stirling canceled a workshop on homophobic bullying after its board of management decided "both sides of the argument should be represented." (Ibiza's Mirror)

Philadelphia's Bryn Mawr College drew criticism after sending out weight students on email advertising a fitness program. Targeted students with "thick" body mass indexes were identified by information from the school's health center. Center Director Dr. Ray Kier apologized "to anyone who has been upset or offended by our communication." (NBC News)

JEN SORESEN

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HARRY BLISS



FRAN KRAUSE

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RED MEAT

Cartoon by the author of *their worst of friends*

MAX CANNON



THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



PRODUCING
ORGANIZER

WIZN
www.wizn.com

Buzz
www.buzz.com

SEVEN DAYS
www.sevendays.com

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING

MAGIC
HAT
20th Annual
MARDIGRAS

A PARTY TO BENEFIT
Vermont Foodbank

SATURDAY, FEB. 28TH

SATURDAY * 3 PM * FREE EVENT

PARADE

MAIN STREET * BURLINGTON

JOIN US AT NOON FOR FESTIVITIES DOWNTOWN:

- * READS GARDNER
- * PERFORMERS FROM THE BINGLESHIFF FAMILY CIRCUS
- * FREE PHOTO BOOTH
- * LIVE MUSIC FROM **SAMRATUGADA**

AT THE CITY HALL PARK BAZAAR

- * LIVE MUSIC FROM **GRIPPO FUNK BAND**
- * KING AND QUEEN COSTUME CONTEST
- * EACH WINNER WILL RECEIVE A PAIR OF STYLISH GLOVES AND 200 PRIZES

FESTIVITIES
NOON-5PM

FULL EVENT AND FREE SHUTTLE DETAILS AT MARDIGRAS.NET OR SCAN SMARTCODE

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM

WINDMILL
BREWERY

WINDMILL
BREWERY

Little Clamshell
BREWERY

LIBRARY

Hilton

WINDMILL
BREWERY

Yelp



EVER WONDER ABOUT THE NUTS WE SELL?

OUR BULK NUTS

- **Organics:** Large selection of organic and Fair Trade nuts
- **Origins:** We tell you the source and origin of our nuts
- **Fresh:** Our vendors roast right before they ship
- **No waste:** Buy just what you need
- **Sourced** from the very best farms

THEIR NUTS

- **Few** organic and Fair Trade options
- **Roasted** with added oils
- **Origins:** Often not labeled with location nuts were grown
- **Packaged:** Often roasted and pre-package months before



**healthy
living**
Market and Café

EATING IS BELIEVING

\$1 OFF

1 Pound of Healthy Living
**ORGANIC UNSALTED
ROASTED CASHEWS**



Good at Healthy Living Market
and Café only. Cannot be
combined with other offers or
coupons. Limit one per customer.
Offer expires 4/3/14.